Essays.

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ESSAYS AND STORIES

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(Speranza)

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CONTENTS.

AMERICAN WOMEN.

The first question propounded to a traveller on returning from a transatlantic tour is usually, "What is your opinion of American women?" for, in truth, the American woman is by far the most important element in the social machinery of the States.

Her reputation for beauty and smartness has spread over the whole earth, and to doubt her fascination would be a heresy even beyond this agnostic age. However, we are, fortunately, not wholly dependent on the crude judgment of awe-struck, startled travellers, saturated as they are with old-world prejudice, and prisoned in its narrow, conventional traditions; for the Americans, having already interviewed and exhausted all Europe, are now laudably engaged in the process of interviewing each other, and that with an acuteness and insight far beyond the observing faculty of the bewildered foreigner.

Nothing, in fact, can be more interesting than

the analytical descriptions of their own people to be found in the pages of the great living novelists of America; and we may certainly accept in perfect faith the clever, clearly outlined sketches of eminent writers, such as Howells, Henry James, Cable, Aldrich, Edgar Fawcett, and other leaders of the great modern school of fiction, as the fullest expression of that wonderful product of social progress and advanced intelligence—the nineteenth-century American woman.

Every type is reproduced in their gallery of contemporary portraits—from the fragile, luxurious beauty of the South, to the audacious, energetic newspaper woman of the North, who scampers through Europe, note-book in hand, interviewing everyone that has a name, and exhausting every subject, after half-an-hour's study, in letters of pungent criticism for her weekly paper, dated generally from "the express train," "the tunnel," or "the steamboat."

Every city also has its peculiar characteristics, and with these we are made fully acquainted through the novelists. In Boston, for instance, the women are "intense" and transcendental; it is the city of advanced intellects and the emancipated woman. The celebrated Margaret Fuller, the

"Zenobia" of Hawthorne's *Blithedale Romance,* gave the first impulse there to psychical progress when she inaugurated the literary *salon* at her own house, selected and announced the subject for the evening's discussion, and brilliantly led the conversation herself. Since then Boston is the accepted exponent of the higher culture; and the intellectual women who gather there under the shadow of the world-soul, treat life with a lofty and serene philosophy, proudly disdaining the fashion, follies and dress of New York.

Philadelphia is the Quaker city—neat, orderly, calm and reserved, where everyone seems to go to bed at ten o'clock, and the ladies make no effort to heighten the charm of their pretty faces by the adventitious aid of rouge or pearl powder. But they cultivate literature, poetry and art; and society is elegant and refined. Among the celebrities of "The Flowery City" may be named the late Professor Gross, eminent in medical science; George Boker, one of the leading poets of America, and Mrs. Bloomfield Moore, who has earned the gratitude of the citizens by her splendid donations of paintings and artistic works, valued at more than five thousand pounds, to the new Museum of Art established there.

Washington is grand and courtly; a stately city of rank and solemnity. The royal ambassadors set the mode, especially the English embassy, which takes the lead in style and splendour that republicans weakly try to emulate by a display of liveried servants and heraldic emblazonments. Caste and class strive eagerly there for precedence, and every young lady looks forward, confidently, to being elected to the English peerage. In that clever novel, *Democracy*, there are capital sketches of life at Washington, where the officials claim to be ultra-aristocrats, and Miss Virginia Dare resolves to become a countess, in which, of course, she succeeds, for what simple English peer could resist her all-compelling energy and smartness? In fact, the American girl is beginning to look on the English peerage as the appanage of her race. Not that she is over-elated at the prospect, for an American woman thinks nothing too good for her that can be had for love or money, no social position too eminent for her merits. If a crowned prince asked her in marriage she would consider it quite right and fitting, and accept her destiny without the least nervous embarrassment.

In every recent American novel there is always an English peer, foolishly devoted to one of these

fair enslavers, who snubs him or takes him, according to caprice, evidently of opinion that the favour is all on her side. In one novel, a peer, with an income of a hundred thousand a year, offers his hand, and is refused because he is only a weak, good-natured person, without that strength of intellect required by an American girl in her lover. All women are queens in America, and have no idea of recognising any social position as higher than their own. From men they exact the utmost homage; indeed, the worship of women is the national religion, a sacred law and gospel that none dare infringe. Many types of face and feature may be found in the vast extent of America with its varied climate and diverse races, but the South and West are particularly rich in strongly-marked characteristics. The Mexicans are fine and handsome, with a mixture of Indian and Spanish blood, from which the women derive their superb hair and eyes and graceful figures, and the men their proud Hidalgo bearing.

The miners of the West are strong, bold and picturesque, as the men who may have led the Argonauts or founded Rome, and are worthy of their western land, which is a paradise of beauty, while every woman looks a Penthesilea or a

brigand queen. The only one section of America that is wholly deficient in personal beauty is the Mormon settlement. The Mormons own a glorious land, and are industrious and orderly, but the women, it is said, are of ideal ugliness of the colourless Saxon type, with white eyes and eyelashes, sandy hair and shapeless features. It is remarkable that not a single Irishwoman is to be found in the Mormon city, but the bright-eyed daughters of Erin have no objection to intermarry with the Chinese, who are always anxious to obtain Irish wives. Consequently a great colony of Hiberno-Mongolian origin is spreading along the border of the Pacific, and ethnologists will soon have a new type of humanity to study.

In New York there is no distinctive type of race—all races have been fused there into uniformity by the same habits, passions and ambitions, and the influence of Europe on society. The women are dressed by Paris and the men by London, and life is modelled on the English style, but with much more splendour of outlay and effect. New York is the true paradise of women, where they glow and glitter in their gorgeous plumage, while the men toil and work in their dusky offices to amass the wealth that may cover their wives

with diamonds to startle Europe—a city of splendour, luxury and pleasure; the third great capital of the world, and equal in wealth to London and Paris put together. Long after America had thrown off the political yoke of England, the bondage to English modes of thought still remained. The awe of England was upon the heads of the people, and social life, in consequence, was provincial and imitative, and wholly wanting in national individuality. America, in fact, was but a suburb of London, an infinite and colourless Bayswater. They did not dare to originate—they copied. They were fed on English ideas, affected English manners, and yearned to find some English ancestor of established lineage to whom they could affiliate themselves. Altogether, they were prostrated in humble reverence at the feet of the mighty mother. But steam and the rapid facilities of travel have gradually weakened this awful homage to old social tradition. Modern America now laughs at "the rusty, antiquated usages of England," the rigid distinction of classes, the ridiculous ceremonials, the abject servility of the court life, with the bowings and backslidings of the gold-laced officials, so degrading, in the eyes of a republican, to freeborn humanity. And they

mock also at the prosy, dreary, respectable papers, their petty politics, their Hares and Rabbits Bill, and they weary of the dull routine of society, the vapid talk where no large free ideas are ever circulated, and no recognition is apparent of the great fact that democracy is sweeping down monarchy with all its antiquated ritual, to the moles and the bats. London, says an American writer, has two idols—Science and Royalty, and conversation fluctuates between the Electric Light and the last Foundation Stone laid by Royal hands. They find the English slow, ponderous, conventional; a people that would never startle (it would be bad form), who repress all individual assertion, and insist that everything should be done and said according to the custom and usage which has the force of law in English society. They notice the languid drawl of the English accent, the half-finished sentences, as if to complete an idea in the utterance would entirely bore the speaker with fatigue. The English, they say, speak nicely, but they do not know how to converse. They have no fluency, are crude and abrupt in expression, and quite infelicitous in smooth transitions. The girls are dull, diffident and monotonous, with their pale eyes, pale hair and sealskin jackets; one might

gather a thousand or fifty thousand of them together, and they would all be found precisely alike.

The American woman, on the contrary, disdains this colourless uniformity, and revolts against social usages that would limit her bold originality and assertive self-manifestation. She is proud, conscious, strong-souled and self-reliant. "I am an American girl" is answer enough to any timid old-world bigot. And this phrase expresses at once dignity, courage, self-respect and the independence of the emancipated republican. The English girl, in one of the novels, utters her little, harmless platitudes in a soft, low monotone of broken sentences. "How nice," she murmurs, "to have pictures on a rainy day—and it rains so often!" and so on, and so on, in a limpid, weak, watery way. Always shy and indistinct with her half-utterances, the stiff conventional attitude never changed, nor the level murmur illustrated by gesture or laughter. But the vigorous, vivacious American girl never omits a syllable; she speaks in a loud, clear voice, as if for the reporters, and as one worth hearing, who demands and extorts attention. She accentuates all she says with firm purpose and resolute determination to be

heard. She is sharp, smart and terrible at repartee, and may, perhaps, be sometimes fatiguing to the English ear with her voluble flow of words. The English girl never stares, nor asks questions with obtrusive curiosity. She is trained to seem and to be a negation—a dormant soul without volition or an opinion on any subject, felt or expressed. Her American cousin, however, has an aggressive frankness, based chiefly upon interrogatories and bold personalities. Her gaze is clear and direct; not "the stony British stare," but with the large, truthful eyes of childhood—the eager, inquiring glance of a candid nature. Truth is in all her words. This Puritan virtue has indeed remained an heirloom in the American family. They have none of the subtle evasion and graceful mendacities of high life in Europe—the delicate flatteries, so charming and so false. These are stamped out at once by the frank, fearless candour of the American girl. Yet one trembles a little before a candour so uncompromising; for we all shrink from the downright expression of the actual, and the glare of an unshadowed truth makes one nervous. But the Americans have no mercy. Nature meant them for a nation of interviewers. They generalise, describe and label you after ten

minutes' inspection, and send off your portrait across the Atlantic, with all your imperfections on your head, for the amusement of the crowd, who must be propitiated by a victim, and who applaud and shout, "Bravo, Toro!" when a "special" has been more than usually successful in tossing the victim from his horns, to be trampled in the dust of the arena. Yet they are by no means an ill-natured or cruel people; on the contrary, they are kind, generous and charming to the passing stranger who enters within their gates, but the Sovereign Demos has no reverence, and finds a subtle pleasure and sense of power in giving pain to sensitive natures; so, like Nero, they sometimes light their gardens with live torches for want of better pastime. They seem also to take pleasure in showing England that they are no longer held in bondage to English opinion; they have even suggested that their native language should in future be called American, not English; and they have already adopted a quite independent system of *orthografy,* from which all the superfluous letters are excluded.

It is not improbable, therefore, that a new dialect, which may be called Americanese, will be rapidly formed. Neologism is popular in Amer-

ica; they are perpetually adding new words to their vocabulary, borrowed, perhaps, from the Indians, or the Mexicans, or the Californian miners, or transmuted from the Chinese dialects blended with Gaelic, which the Chinese colony learn from their Irish wives. So that when all these elements have properly simmered together for a reasonable time, the result will be a language widely different from the English of Addison and Ruskin.

Speech is a passion with the Americans. They orate at all times, and on all subjects, with a copious redundancy of expression that is startling to those accustomed only to the slow-moving, hesitating tongue of English speakers, who always seem painfully seeking for the next word, and finding it only by a happy chance after many efforts.

The Americans (men and women alike) are the most voluble of nations, and when trained are the most fluent orators. The women express their ideas with firmness, precision and perfect self-possession, and are admirable speakers on the platform. While men like Wendell Phillips, Dougherty, Lowell, Boyle O'Reilly and others would have made their mark as orators in any assembly in the world. This gift of natural eloquence is due, perhaps, to the strain of Irish blood in their veins—

for all men of note in America will be found connected, in some way or other, with the fluent, passionate Celtic race. The Saxon basis is the rough block of the nation, but it is the Celtic influence that gives it all its artistic value and finish. A recent President of the United States was the son of an Irishman; the great novelist, Henry James, is the grandson of an Irish emigrant; and the late Mayor of New York, also an admirable speaker, was an Irishman. Ireland has added not a little to the triumph of American genius, and America, in return, has often nobly flung her protecting banner over the desolate exiles.

The Americans are not remarkable as painters or musicians, but as actors, orators and writers they may take a foremost place in the world's pantheon. The power of expression by verbal symbols has certainly been given to them. Emerson is a study of thought crystallised into the most perfect forms; and the leading, living writers, in grace and charm of style, need not fear rivalry with the best English writers. We recognise at once in their work the artist touch, the care in composition, the purity of expression and the entire absence of the Zola element of degrading and degraded language, scenes and images. The Amer-

ican style is acute, fresh and exhilarating, full of quaint humour and gentle satire, which amuses without being malignant, and the pictures of social life, of the statesman and the journalist; the woman of the world, with her perfect grace and superficial culture; the fashionable girl, with her gossamer chatter; and the advanced woman, with her trenchant utterances, are all admirably sketched in the new novels.

We gather from these clever works the full expression of American life, with its strong desires, fierce rivalries, limitless rage for speculation, and energetic will to work, spend, enjoy and make the best of this poor mortal existence, without wasting time on corroding thoughts over transitory pleasures.

Americans are not given to brood over the mysteries of life. They never question the universe for solution of the unknowable; they have no morbid melancholy, no divine discontent, and never worry their heads over agnosticism, positivism or pessimism, but accept religion as it comes to them without any questioning analysis, simply as part of the great whirl of work, dress and fashion, that makes up the sum of daily life.

They like reading, but not study. Everyone in

the cars seems furnished with a sixpenny novel or magazine, while newspapers cover the land like snowflakes in midwinter; but above all, they like lectures, because they can thus combine easily acquired information with the excitement of dress and outdoor variety, and a crowded lecture is infinitely more amusing than a solitary magazine; besides, it is of importance to them to assimilate knowledge rapidly as they eat and live, for life with them is a feverish rush of excitement and enjoyment. They are rapid in speech, in travel, in speculation, in everything. They live, every moment of their lives, an intense, daring, crowded, audacious, reckless and restless life of work, wealth and luxury. The present is enough for them, they take each moment as it comes, and get all the good out of it they can.

There is no girlhood or boyhood; everyone is born grown up, and the life of self-assertion and speculation begins from the cradle. The young girls have perfect freedom at an age when Europe would not allow them out of the nursery. They receive gentlemen alone in the evenings, and go to theatres and public places with them, unaccompanied by any duenna; for the chaperone and lynx-eyed matron of old-world usage and tradition has

been quite suppressed in America, along with superfluous vowels.

In America youth reigns supreme and unfettered, and there is little reference paid to parental authority. Young girls receive and go out alone or with their male friends, as fancy pleases, without any reference to the unwritten law of tradition, which is of such overwhelming force in Europe that to break it would incur the ban of society.

Women in America, whether married or single, rule society, and do not suffer society to rule them. They carry all before them with imperial sway, and are the beautiful despots of the land. Fathers, brothers and husbands are at work all day in the fierce strife and excitement of the ceaseless speculation which is the national form of gambling. But the men never interfere with the interior management of the house; all the arrangements and expenditure and machinery of social life are left to the taste, judgment and discretion of the wife. The province of the husband is merely to fling down the showers of gold, which the fascinating better half spends right royally.

American women, too, are learned as well as being admirable housekeepers. They can extract square roots as well as pickle them, and think no

more of encountering the difficulties of Latin, Greek, and all terrific 'ologies, than our ladies those of the crewel or Berlin work.

What, however, is of more consequence than all these elaborate efforts to make women ugly by making them learned—for has not Walter Savage Landor said, that *thought* adds beauty to a man, but takes it from a woman?—is the study of that art in which the beautiful Americanese have attained already to a high perfection, the *en touto niko* art for a woman, that of *dress*.

Yet, alas that grace, intellect and French *tournure* cannot make youth and beauty immortal! These fair and fragile Americans, though possessing all, yet fade as quickly as the night-blowing cereus, reminding one of Goethe's pretty apologue. "Why am I so evanescent, O Zeus?" asked Beauty. "Because I have only made the evanescent beautiful," replied the god. And when youth, beauty, the flowers and the spring heard that, they withdrew themselves weeping from before the throne of Jupiter. Early marriages are consequently much more frequent in America than here, for at twenty these fair destroyers are already in the *mezzo-cammin,* or even the *selva oscura,* and at twenty-five they are but traditions. *"Mais jet-*

tons une voile sur la passée," as the Frenchman remarked, while placing a shawl upon one of these sad legends of antiquity. But no matter how many decades she may number, woman is always the great ruling power of America, and the American has become the representative woman of the world. Not crushed down as in Europe by old traditions of mental and legal inferiority, but asserting her sovereign right to equality, and to exact and receive the homage of men. Queens of beauty, lavish and extravagant in all things, gorgeous in toilette, insatiable of pleasure, surrounded by the costly luxuries of often illimitable wealth, the women of fashion bask in a changeless radiance of show and glitter, for money is easily made, and if also easily lost they care little; they enjoy while they can, eat, dress, dazzle and delight; but love is not by any means a leading interest in the life of an American woman, and seldom is scandal heard of in their social circle; for the very freedom of social intercourse trains woman to habits of self-reliance, and encourages so much self-esteem that they are quite insensible to flattery. They know all their perfections thoroughly, and they accept all praise as only a proper acknowledgment of their merits.

Besides, American life is carried on in a perpetual public glare. In their huge hotels and boarding-houses, caravanseries, where hundreds meet and feed and talk together, there is no mystery possible; nor is it needed, for divorce is so easily obtained that passionate dramas of fatal love and remorse form no element in their lives. If the marriage bond is found too galling, it may be broken at once with very little trouble; no one minds these minor family arrangements. Whatever is legal is right; and the divorced pair meet in society, each supplied with a new partner, and they dance in the same set with cool nonchalance, and sometimes even valse together with all that supreme indifference to harrowing sentiment which is the perfection of good manners.

The young girls also, though allowed such entire social freedom, are saved from any compromising entanglement by a certain consciousness of their own value. They are not coquettes, and have more pride than vanity—a dignity which permits no shadow of disrespect; and their genial camaraderie with the other sex is often much more allied to friendship than to love. The passion of the American woman is rather for dress, pleasure and display. She loves to live in public, to lead

and reign in society. Notoriety is not displeasing to her, and she attains it easily through the press, for there are hundreds of writing women, though but few really eminent names. Among leading brilliant writers may be named Mrs. Julia Ward Howe, whose writings, both in prose and verse, place her in the front rank of gifted women. Her celebrated poem, *The Battle Hymn of the Republic,* is one of the finest lyrics of the age, and deserves a place in the literature of nations. In life and manner she is simple and unaffected. Her brilliancy is all of the intellect. Yet, even in her unpretentious Quaker dress, one can see that she has had remarkable beauty, which her daughter, one of the loveliest girls in America, has inherited.

Mrs. Hodgson Burnett, though only a naturalised American, yet may be called an American writer. She was first known in England by her admirable novel, *That Lass o' Lowrie's,* of which thirty thousand copies were sold of the first edition. This was followed by her clever work, *Through One Administration,* a brilliant sketch of social, political and official life at Washington, drawn with sharp and rather satirical touches; but her popularity was assured by the success of *Little Lord Fauntleroy,* especially in its dramatic form.

An acute American critic remarks of Mrs. Burnett: "She understands suffering and sinning natures, and discovers gracious secrets in forbidding characters."

Mrs. Atherton of New York, one of the young band of female writers, has obtained considerable celebrity by her novels, especially by *Los Cerritos,* an interesting and picturesque picture of rude Californian life amongst the squatters, with their strange idiom and fierce, lawless ways, all most vividly described. Another of the young writers, Amelia Reeves, is chiefly remarkable for a very lovely face, an unbridled imagination, with a total disregard of probability in her stories, and a wild, passionate fervour of eloquent expression.

Mrs. Pïatt, wife of the American Consul at Queenstown, Ireland, takes high rank amongst the poetesses of America. Her verse has great strength and beauty, and is always strikingly original, yet simply tender and sympathetic, especially when touching on the subject of children, or the poor and suffering. While Louise Chandler Moulton—a poet celebrity in London as well as in America—has set all the soft human emotions to music in her beautiful and cadenced verse. Both Tennyson and Browning extolled her genius, and Mrs. Moul-

ton is proud to remember them amongst her best friends.

Literary women hold a high place in American society, and receive more social homage, as a tribute to intellect, than is accorded to literary women in London. Their brilliant circles include all that is eminent in genius, and they inspire, and stimulate with generous praise and true enthusiasm, all that is noble in mind or work. Thus they form an important section of society, and use all the immense power American women possess as social leaders, to uphold the dignity of intellect by refined and high-toned social intercourse. As social writers, they do not indulge in the grotesque sarcasm which so often disfigures the productions of the male contributors; and, as a rule, whatever is best and most appreciative in the society journals of comment or criticism may be safely attributed to a female pen. The most important and successful journalist in the States is a woman—Mrs. Frank Leslie. She owns and edits many journals, and writes with bright vivacity on the social subjects of the day, yet always evinces a high and good purpose; and, with her many gifts, her brilliant powers of conversation in all the leading tongues of Europe, her splendid residence and immense

income, nobly earned and nobly spent, Mrs. Frank Leslie may be considered the leader and head of the intellectual circles of New York.

In former times the Americans lived almost entirely and piratically on English thought; but they are now producing a new and independent literature, of which the style, tone and colouring are quite removed and distinct from English models. While, with regard to technical excellence, the type, paper, binding, illustrations, woodcuts and etchings, they seem far ahead of the old country. They have also brought to the very highest perfection the photographic art, of which Saroni's portraits are an admirable example. All the leading Continental works, from Paris to Stockholm and St. Petersburg, are translated at once, and in the best style; while works by native writers on science, art, literature, history and archæology are beginning to appear in copious profusion. To these the current literature of England is added. Everything good is appropriated, though, it must be confessed, seldom paid for; a serious injustice to English brain-workers. But the system at least spreads the fame of English writers; while in England scarcely anything is known of the rich and varied literature of America. Hawthorne's

Scarlet Letter first startled the English mind with a sense of the peculiar intellectual power of America; but it is only recently that the eminent living novelists are becoming known to the reading public of England. A great deal of the popular writing (especially the journalistic) is certainly grotesque, personal and impertinent, reckless of giving pain, and wanting in good manners, reverence, reticence and due consideration for others. It seems as if a people that have ceased to fight for liberty still need blood, and must have the arena and the amphitheatre, the fierce lions of the Press, and the victims who are interviewed and slain. In the capricious chances of popular favour the victim may certainly be sometimes crowned, but is too often rent or stoned. The Americans are fond of travel, though the childlike worship of the Old World no longer exists. They have begun to recognise their own immense advantages, and to find out that Europe is "rather a humbug"—a mummy, smothered in bandages of old forms and formulas, that are but the cerements of the dead. The tone of American thought is colossal, their country is colossal, their mode of living, expenditure, wealth and speculations are all of immense proportion. "They consume twice as much of

everything as any other people on earth," one of their own writers says. It is not surprising, then, that Europe seems so small to them, after the vastness of their own horizon. The mountains, rivers and plains are as nothing to them after their own, and "the baby-house scenery" of Europe fails to impress people who have looked on the foam and heard the thunders of Niagara. Even the Atlantic is but a mere ferry in their eyes, and they think no more of a run over to Europe than a Londoner of a run down to Brighton. They laugh at the little kings and kingdoms, and, in their large, expansive way, speak of "the Latin countries" generally, as if quite too insignificant for separate notice.

"The Innocents Abroad" are, in fact, ruthless iconoclasts, and mock at legends and ruins, rubbish and relics. They do not find the rail cars as comfortable, the hotels as sumptuous, the champagne as good as the American; nor the women as beautiful as those they left in Baltimore and New York, while to American women, accustomed as they are to admiration and homage, European society seems dull, heavy, monotonous and unappreciative. They do not care to go "moping about galleries or churches." They find Venice slow,

and stories of the Falieri rather a bore. They want life, variety, fashion, amusement, picnics and promenades—enjoyment, in a word; not guide-books and routine. They are seeking material for a smart letter to the journals, and they find only formality and the police.

The female tourist is very amusingly drawn in one of the recent novels. She does not care for Turner's landscapes nor Assyrian bulls; she wants the present, the actual humanity, not fossil bones. Her fervent aspiration is to meet all the celebrities of London at a dinner-party, to note their peculiarities, faces and features, talk and movements, and then dash off a letter to the journals, with accurate descriptions, marked, no doubt, by all the terrible candour of the American nature, which is never glamoured by an illusion, but goes right at the fact with fatal precision.

Americans are amazed at the blind devotion of Europe to the old grooves and the ancient idols of routine and form, apparently unconscious that the pillars of the temple are failing and falling, and that any day a crash may come, bringing down the whole superstructure, built on ceremonial and symbols that have lost their strength since they lost their meaning.

Yet the spell of England, "mystic, mediæval England," is upon them still; and London has a charm for Americans beyond all classic Europe, as the origin of their nation, the founder of their laws, religion and social habits. "Sombre London, the mighty mother of our mighty race," as one of their writers finely designates the great capital of the English people, has an irresistible attraction for them. They love its pleasures and social crowds and stately court functions, with all the awful solemnity and the splendour of visible royalty.

Some even assert a liking for the shrouded atmosphere, the soft, moist air, the veiled skies, and the light, "the ineffable English light," so restful and soothing after the lurid glare and cloudless azure heaven of America. And the old homage to England is shown in an effort, which is decidedly in progress, to form an aristocracy after the English model, with titled distinctions.

The wives of officials are beginning to arrogate to themselves the prefix of "Honourable," if it belongs by right of office to the husband; and the wife of the next American Minister at London may, perhaps, require to be called "Her Excellency."

The movement, however, has no chance of success, for the good sense of the American public is entirely against it; and already the leading journals have denounced its absurdity, along with the liveries, the fourteen servants, the coat of arms, and the four horses of the republican imitators of the vain-glories of a monarchy.

An aristocracy is the growth of a thousand years' feudal lordship, when men had the power of life and death over their vassals; and the English aristos still retain the haughty habits of command, and are treated with traditional reverence, though the power and the feudal rights have passed away.

But an aristocracy cannot be made at once out of men who rise from rude toil or sordid vocations, by dint of fierce competition in trade, or some lucky chance in striking oil.

The Americans should be content to remain as they are, the great republican expression of human progress; where everyone stands on the same level, and is entitled to the same consideration; where the rail-splitter may become the equal of kings, and the daughter of the dry-goods man take her place amid the nobles of Europe, and consider herself quite their equal.

The true dignity of America is in the brain

power that has transformed a wild, waste continent into a splendid world of advanced civilisation by the stupendous energy and intelligence of working men.

The old-world nations have been for six thousand years painfully toiling from Ararat to the Atlantic to advance the standard of humanity, and still the triumphs of intellect over ignorance, misery and desolation are incomplete. But in a hundred years the Americans have spread over half the world, furrowed it with iron roads, spanned the mighty rivers, driven paths through the mountains, covered the desolate plains with flourishing cities, and sent the full tide of civilisation from ocean to ocean with a force and power that leaves the old-world kingdoms far behind in the race of progress.

The sixty millions of Americans are made up of a wonderful medley of heterogeneous elements, but they have all the one watchword, "Advance!" They are recruited from the young blood of all nations, for only youth and energy emigrate, and they have the spirit, the courage and the daring of their origin.

Thus the process of fusion goes on rapidly, and already America is becoming strong and assertive

with the dignity of a united people. There are no oppressed nationalities, all are equal and have the same privileges, and all uphold the republic with pride and affection, and never dream of giving up the advantages it offers to go back to the bondage of old-world limitations and the chilling influence of class prejudice.

It is remarkable how soon all races become Americanised. No foreign language takes root among them. In a generation foreigners forget their native tongue, and English—the wonderful English language that seems made for the universe—remains triumphant and alone.

American women are not idle in the war of progress against prejudice. They have taken an advanced position in the strife for right and justice, and demand for their sex perfect equality with men—social, legal, professional and political, the right to vote, and even to be elected to Congress, and as they are always terribly in earnest, and have an indomitable will, no doubt they will gain all they demand. And already the women of Europe are following their example. English law has recently made vast concessions, and even English society, prisoned as it is in routine, is making

praiseworthy efforts to cast aside many of the stupid old conventions of our false humanity.

The English girl is not so "dull and diffident" as America represents her. She is becoming inspired with a love of freedom and a consciousness of her own mental power, and claims a social, professional and political equality with the other sex. The "matron," hitherto thought so indispensable in society as guide and protector, is becoming an obsolete institution. The English girl is learning independence, and by earnest study, intellectual training and serious life work, is fitting herself for a higher and nobler position in the social organisation than she has hitherto held. Thus she will attain to the self-reliance and dignity that make her American sisters so important as a social power, while at the same time they lose none of their fascination as women.

There is a powerful electric influence in the American nature that draws all other nations into its current, and an amount of overflowing nervous energy that is irresistibly stimulating to all who come into contact with it.

The gates of empires cannot be closed against eternal principles, nor can they be warred against by material agencies.

The march of ideas is predestined. Especially when ideas mean a free career for talent, equal chances of work and wealth for all men and women alike, and the fall of ignorance and idleness before enlightenment and industry and education, for on these things the well-being of a people is founded, and the happiness of nations and of humanity.

IRISH LEADERS AND MARTYRS.

The fervent nationality evoked by Moore's music and song at the opening of the century, and formulated afterwards into an immense political force by O'Connell, rose to a fever of enthusiasm in 1848, when a madness of lyrical passion seemed to sweep over the heart of the nation, and "Young Ireland" sprang to manhood, splendid in force and intellect, earnest in aim, and stainless in life and act.

Amongst the new band of workers were powerful organisers like Gavan Duffy; chivalrous leaders like Smith O'Brien; orators like Dillon and Meagher; and fervent apostles of freedom like John Mitchell, one of the boldest, bravest, and most noble-hearted of patriots. But the man, above all, whose words were a tocsin of Revolution, was the poet, orator and leader, Thomas Davis.

His whole public and literary career barely exceeded four years, yet, in that brief time, he created

a nation with noble, definite aims, and passionate resolves to achieve success.

A delirium of patriotic excitement raged through the land as these young orators and poets flashed the full light of their genius on the wrongs, the hopes, and the old heroic memories of their country; even the upper classes in Ireland awoke for the first time to the sense of the nobleness of a life devoted to national regeneration.

A *Gott Trunkenheit,* the "Trunkenheit ohne Wein," was on all hearts, the divine fanaticism of youth and genius. The leaders spoke as inspired men, and their words, like the words of the spirit, gave new life and power to every lofty purpose and high resolve. Even Trinity College struck the Irish harp to Hymns of Freedom, and the most popular poem of that era, "Who fears to speak of Ninety-eight?" was written by a young collegian, afterwards a distinguished Fellow of the university; and an eminent Irish Judge, but recently passed away, won his first laurels in literature by songs contributed to the national cause.

Another of the leading spirits of that day was Ferguson, afterwards Sir Samuel Ferguson, who illustrated all that was grand or tragic in the past by his splendid ballads; and who flung the silken

singing robes of the bard over the muse of Irish history; while Aubrey de Vere, the most cultured of all the Irish poets, crowned her with the golden diadem of his perfect verse.

The powerful ballads of Charles Gavan Duffy also achieved a rapid fame, and will for ever hold a distinguished place in Irish literature; while as a song writer, John Francis Waller almost rivalled Moore in the melody and music of his words; and his graceful and beautiful lyrics have the true mirth and pathos of Irish nature, blended and united. Denis Florence M'Carthy, the translator of "Calderon," wrote patriot verse that clashed like cymbals; and Clarence Mangan brought treasures from every land and language to weave into the national minstrelsy; while Carleton and Banim proved their claim to rank as poets, as well as the greatest amongst Irish novelists.

Nor was genius unrepresented in the other arts. Frederick Burton, the painter, now Sir Frederick Burton, first drank inspiration at the holy wells of Ireland, and has never known inspiration more fervent and glowing since he left their tree-shadowed mysteries for his English home; and George Petrie's divine soul grew diviner amidst the holy ruins of the ancient abbeys and the purple mist-

crowned solitudes of the Irish mountains; for love of country is one of the great motive forces of the mind, and the Irish have ever been singularly susceptible to its influence as a stimulus to action. Nor is the influence evanescent, for the Irish people have been tried through much suffering, yet neither the prison, nor exile, nor broken hearts, nor even death itself, could weaken the love and reverence that binds them to their motherland.

In the great outpouring of the Spirit in '48, not only the cultured classes, but the toilers and artisans also, many of them were seized with the poetic frenzy, and wrote and published verses of singular merit and strong, rude power; for Celtic fervour always finds its fullest expression in oratory and song. The Irish, especially, have a natural gift of copious and fluent speech. They are orators at all times, but under the influence of strong excitement they become poets, and in that stormy era, when every nation was reading its Rights by the flames of burning thrones, the Irish poets, mad with the magnificent illusions of youth, flashed their hymns of hope and songs of defiance like a fiery cross over land and lake, over river and mountain, throughout Ireland, awakening souls to life

that might long have lain dead but for the magic incantation of their words.

Yet, the fate of many of those who made '48 a splendid moment in Irish history, was dark and tragic, and the flame lit up by patriotism died out in martyrdom. The brave and brilliant Thomas Francis Meagher, the handsome and gifted young orator of the National party, was drowned in the waters of the Mississippi, and D'Arcy M'Ghee, the poet and statesman, met his death in Canada, murdered by some Irish fanatics who believed that he had given up nationality for place. The high-souled Smith O'Brien, the descendant of kings, and venerated by the people as their chief, was tried and condemned to death, though the sentence was commuted afterwards to exile. He served out his time through the long weary years, disdaining to break his parole, and then returned to Ireland to die. His last words were: "My heart is broken."

John Dillon, the impassioned orator, who could sway thousands to his will by the magnetism of his presence, looking every inch the magnificent Spanish Hidalgo, with his dark eyes and raven hair, was doomed to prison and exile in the prime of his splendid manhood; and came back only in

long after-years, a white-haired, mournful wreck, to rest in an Irish grave.

> He looked not like the ruins of his youth,
> But like the ruins of those ruins.

And John Mitchell, the all-powerful advocate of human freedom, suffered also the bitter martyrdom of exile, till youth, hope and energy were all crushed out of his life, and then he was permitted to return and see his native land once more. But the shadow of death was already on him, and he died just as the people, with all their old vivid love for the patriot-martyr unchanged, had elected him as one of their representatives in Parliament.

So they laid him in his Irish grave, with the shamrock on his breast, and never a truer heart, with its scorn of everything false, or a more powerful brain as thinker and writer, could be named amongst those who have lived and worked and died for Ireland.

Clarence Mangan, one of the most remarkable of the gifted young race of that era, was found almost perishing of want in the streets of Dublin; and he died shortly after in the hospital whither they carried him.

Henry O'Neil, the artist and writer, to whom

we are indebted for that truly splendid work, "The Sculptured Crosses of Ireland," was sustained chiefly by charity during the closing years of his life, and his family, after his death, were left almost in utter destitution.

But the list is endless of Irish genius left to struggle hopelessly against the corroding cares of life. A natural result when there is no kinship or sympathy between the rulers and the ruled, no pride of race, no heroic memories, no traditions of suffering common to both; yet the word *country* should be for ever sacred, and lie at the base of all individual action and effort; for love of country is the divine force that can alone war against the degrading tendencies of mere material gain; and no mental or moral elevation can be attained by a people who do not, above all, and before all, things, uphold and reverence the holy rights of their Motherland.

THE POET AS TEACHER.

It is one of Goethe's profound aphorisms, that "Every day we should in some way renew our impressions of the true and the beautiful by a verse from some great poet, the sight of a painting or a statue, or by a noble thought from some heroic mind; for the spiritual within is ever in danger of being choked and suffocated by the rank luxuriance of the weeds and thorns that crowd our daily life." In this country, however, Art has but few temples wherein lessons of grace and beauty can be taught the people; nor can even the glorious book of Nature be enjoyed by those who, with toiling hands and ever lowered eyes, work day and night at the loom of life to earn the scanty bread of subsistence.

The poor in these rough northern climes have little time for the dreamy musings over the illuminated pages of Nature, to which the luxurious indolence of a southern existence gives such full facility. The sunset and the cloud, the spiritual

influence of dying day, or of night with her starry host; the grandeur of the lonely mountain, the song of waters, the choral music of the waving trees—all the beauty and melody of the world, is, in a great degree, mute and veiled to our weary toiling slaves of civilisation. But literature, in the full plenitude of its ennobling influence, can reach all classes, the lowest as the highest.

The words of man can permeate where the music of the forest trees never can be heard. In the cabin, the cellar, the factory, the mine, amongst the children of the cities or the plains, wherever there is a soul however darkened, the souls of other men can reach him; the divine thinkers of all ages may come in and sit down by him, though his dwelling be the meanest hut. The soul at least can "build herself a lordly pleasure-house," be the poor, toiling, material frame ever so lowly located. The duty of a government, then, is to ameliorate the condition of the people as far as possible by affording every facility whereby these angel ministers may pass to and fro amongst them. It is ignorance that degrades, not poverty or toil. "That one man dies ignorant who has a capacity for knowledge, that I call a tragedy," is the deep and wise utterance of the great thinker and phil-

osopher—Carlyle. "Every man," he adds, "even the meanest, is a priest sent to minister in the Temple of Immensity." And if the masses of men everywhere have fallen from this high birthright, so that the general characteristic of the labouring classes has hitherto been that of the lowest mental and physical degradation, the cause and the consequences must be laid to the charge of the ruling classes who for ages have debarred them from the light and privileges of knowledge. The truth seems only lately to have dawned upon the English mind that education was necessary to build up a noble race of citizens, and that every material advance, without a corresponding moral and intellectual progression, only ensured a vaster amount of crime by increasing the facilities whereby all the tendencies of the lower sensuous nature could be gratified.

Education forms the only counterpoise against the low instincts of a darkened intellect. And a world of gladness and blessedness dawns upon the lowliest human life in proportion as the clouds of ignorance are lifted. A noble thought, then, brings joy, for the moral sense is elevated to comprehend it. The beautiful can be unfolded everywhere from the sepal leaves of the visible, and the awak-

ened intellect finds endless sources of joy in the study of the new-learned harmonies between the laws of nature and of spirit.

But the ignorance and darkness to which Ireland was condemned, up to a very recent period, would be scarcely credible, forming as it does part of an empire whose wealth, power and resources are inexhaustible, if it were not also known that everywhere throughout her colonies and her continents England has at all times manifested the one uniform spirit—a love of gain, and a neglect of souls.

Carleton, our great novelist, in the sketch of his own youth, prefixed to the last edition of his *Traits and Stories*, thus speaks of the state of education in his time:—

"In my youth I do not remember a single school in a parish, the extent of which was ten miles by eight. The instruction of the children was a matter in which no one took any interest. Education was wholly left to the hedge schoolmaster."

And we have only to read Carleton's tale of the "Hedge School" for a melancholy proof of what that education was, though the rich humour of his description makes the sketch infinitely amusing. It is indeed coloured from the life, for at

this same Hedge School he himself, the "Great Peasant," received all the instruction of his early years. His trials afterwards in pursuit of knowledge were bitter, but one is half selfish enough not to regret them, since they resulted in that most pathetic tale of his, *The Poor Scholar.*

Tracing, also, the abject misery and degradation of our people to this systematic neglect, even discouragement of education by all in authority, he says:—

"The Irishman was not only not educated, but actually punished for attempting to acquire knowledge in the first place, and in the second, punished also for the ignorance created by its absence. In other words, the penal laws rendered education criminal, and then caused the unhappy people to suffer for the crimes which proper knowledge would have prevented them from committing. It is beyond question, that from the time of the wars of Elizabeth, and the introduction of the Reformation, until very recently, there was no fixed system of education in the country. The people, possessed of strong political and religious prejudices, were left in a state of physical destitution and moral ignorance, calculated to produce ten times

the amount of crime which was committed. Nor is it any wonder if poverty and ignorance combined should give the country a character for turbulence and outrage. The same causes would produce the same effects in any country."

There is truly a deep analogy and intimate connection between morals and education, holiness and intellect. The object of both is the attainment of that ideal perfection which is God's image stamped upon the soul, though obscured for a time by ignorance and vice. Life has no higher meaning than to evolve the inner subjective ideal in word, act and form—that is in Literature, Morals and Art.

And to emancipate this higher nature should be the noblest aim of all education. To remove the mists of sense that stand between the soul and the objects with which it has a natural affinity. To reveal this soul itself in its essential beauty and purity, as the statue becomes revealed slowly from within the block of marble, according as the gross and exoteric is dissevered from it. And as the lower nature is annihilated, the soul will stand forth clearer and clearer, the human life reveal more and more of the beauty, harmony, grace, and

gentleness, which is *love,* and the deep and intimate communion with the hidden and profound things of the universe, which is *knowledge.* For all these things are of the essence of the soul—they dwell in it eternally—are not created, but revealed through culture and discipline. The thoughts of a great man do not startle us because they are new, but because they wake up what has long lain wordless in the deep infinite of our own souls.

This excellence, however, cannot become the law of a man's life until the lower nature is subdued, and made the slave not the master. This is the mystery of "crucifying the flesh." It is a deep truth which should be ever present to us, that each human being is a compound of two natures, the animal and the god—senses and soul, clay and ether; and the true task of life is to evolve the divine from the earthly.

Education, therefore, must contain a moral idea at the foundation, or it becomes only the ally of the senses. By the effect any work in art or literature produces on the mind, and by that only are we to judge its excellence—by the amount of emotion and the kind of emotion which it excites. Schiller's profound comment on St. Peter's at Rome is, that its grandeur consists in making us

grander. The proof likewise of the surpassing excellence of Handel's "Hallelujah Chorus" is, that it excites the highest and sublimest emotion of the soul—worship. Our souls are elevated to his own level by a great artist or poet, and we are for the instant equal to Michael Angelo, Handel or Milton. When the intellect and moral nature thus acts in concert, striving together to realise the subjective ideal, the result is the advancement of our entire spiritual nature towards infinite perfection. It is in a word *religion,* for this is the highest, completest term whereby we can express the eternal asymptote or curve of the soul to God. But of all forms in which the thought of man can be incarnated, poetry is the one which produces the most vivid and instantaneous excitement upon the mind of youth. Children may be insensible to the picturesque, to sculpture, music, painting; but no child-heart is proof against a ballad. Impressions which last a life long are often stamped upon the soul by the chantings of a nurse. Thus Carleton's genius was first awakened by the soft, sweet songs of his mother to him in childhood in her own Irish tongue. Poetry, therefore, must always form an important element in education, because it can be made so powerful an auxiliary. It permeates the

blood, and tinges a nature for ever after. Amongst the working classes especially, literature of feeling and imagination finds ready access. No world of conventionalities rises up as a wall between them and the spiritual, or crushes them day by day with the dull, leaden weight of its petty forms. Their thoughts rush into space more easily than in higher, fettered, artificial modes of life. Their life-task and God—these are the two poles of their existence. How faithfully and trustfully they seem to realise Him as a *Presence* in their daily life! referring all trials, fortunes and events to Him alone—never thinking apparently of secondary causes—and this it is which often gives such dignity and pathos to the sorrows of the poor. Out of these elements, faith, simplicity, and an ever-present sense of the spiritual, is the true poetic spirit made, or the true recipient of poetry; and so in the calendar of genius one finds but few noble pedigrees. Here in our own Ireland have not Carleton, Banim, Griffin, Moore, all sprung from the people? The star rests oftener over the manger than the palace. Knowing, then, the influence of poetry upon the people, and how readily they receive impressions through such a medium, one looks with interest on a collection of poems

issued by the Irish Commissioners of Education, and intended expressly for the young hearts who are to be the working heads of the advancing age. The collection professes to range over a period of 500 years—from Chaucer to the present time—and from such an ample field one might naturally expect all that could elevate, inspire and invigorate. Into this vast temple of thought, where the words of the great of all ages are collected—it is the office of the teacher to lead the spirit-shrouded child, and guide him to every shrine where the true divinity is worshipped; to all that would excite the emotion which produces noble deeds, all that would appeal to the heart through the history, traditions, sorrows, hopes, aspirations of his native land. After the knowledge of God, a wise teacher would implant a Love of Country in the heart of a child. It is the source of all the noblest virtues, of those most difficult to attain, for they rise on the ruins of narrow self-interest. Thus would a noble, large-hearted race of men be reared, fit to act when duty called them to the great redemptive work of life, and a national spirit fostered, which, reacting against petty party egoism, would make them one day worthy of being intrusted with national power.

To unfold to the child all that is beautiful in

nature, and noble in life, is little, unless, at the same time, you give him an object commensurate with the great duties you teach him. The love kindled for humanity must be concentrated where it can act with power. The knowledge acquired should find channels on every side to benefit others, be a man's station ever so apparently isolated and powerless, for to break down the barrier-walls of self, and diffuse and expand the riches of our own mind amongst thousands around, raising them to the level we have reached, no matter how gained, whether by study or through sufferings, has in it something glorious and godlike as an aim of life, and brings to the soul something of divine felicity.

The true aim of all individual effort should be national advance. Our own land is the sphere of our duties. Here God placed us to dress it and keep it; a vineyard of whose state He will one day demand an account. How a lofty self-denying purpose can ennoble the lowest life, poverty, rags and destitution, we know from the history of many a holy saint:

Sacrifice and self-devotion hallow earth and fill the skies,
And the meanest life is sacred whence the highest may arise.

One of the many reasons, perhaps, of Ireland's degradation is, that her gentry were never taught to feel and act as Irishmen! The fact of being placed by God in this particular land seemed never to suggest the idea that they were to work for it, or would have to render an account of their stewardship. Men and women are dead and dying around us, whose hearts through life never throbbed at the word "Country." By some strange hallucination they strove by vulgar imitation to transform themselves into English, and then assumed they were identical, though England by many a bitter sarcasm showed how she scorned their pretended claim.

In the preface to the *Selections for Irish Children* these views of the paramount importance of inculcating a love of home and fatherland are distinctly stated; but throughout the whole collection we find no illustrations whatever of so just a theory. In connection with home or country there is not one verse which would strike into the young Irish heart; and for the names even of our leading Irish writers we may search the volumes in vain. The general tone also is didactic and prosy, quite unfitted to attract the attention of youth. At that age fire and energy are demanded, as a

translation into words of the first throbbings of the eager, buoyant, daring heart. Ethics must be taught in action, in a vivid picture language, in deeds of heroism that make heroes—of patriotism that kindles a glow which keeps burning a life long; but patriotism is the word which, above all others, is excluded from the national education. Irish children, it seems, may be taught everything but what regards Ireland. An instance of this is given, by the compiler, in his introduction to the Ballad Poetry.

For after going over all ballad history, from Homer to Macaulay, through north and south, east and west of Europe, and even crossing the ocean to pay a tribute to the muse of the native savages of America, he says that the national poetry of *Ireland* is a subject upon which he has left himself *no space* to make any remarks.

Numerous instances have been already brought before the public establishing the existence of this quarantine law against all things Irish in the system of national education, yet one would think that literature was too sacred to be made the tool of politics. The thoughts of genius are for all ages; they are the inheritance, the rightful posses-

sion of a people. One is ashamed to see them dovetailed to suit the expediencies of a government.

Is it fair that native shrines should be veiled before the eyes of the young child while he is taught to kneel at those of other lands? Not that sectarianism or one-sidedness in literature should be mistaken for nationality. The mind, like the mystic city of the Apocalypse, should have portals open to all points of earth and heaven, from which a thought, a holy and ennobling thought may come. Heroism from all lands and of any age is still vital and will kindle heroism. We can sympathise with "Horatius Cocles, who kept the bridge so well," or with old King Pharamond, seated calmly by the burning pile to destroy himself if conquered; but in this authorised collection for Irish children, of all the brave deeds our poets sang, of all the wild, beautiful legends of our land, which their verse made more beautiful, not a line is to be found. Holy memories and heroic traditions are the guardian spirits of a people. Why should National Commissioners—

> Scatter these angel guards, glorious and beautiful?

There is an elevation by induction. Show a child what is worthy in his own race and he will

strive to rise to it. Self-reverence is generated, for we reverence our own nature in that of our great men. Different literatures, truly, are but different languages in which one human spirit speaks. But each nation has a peculiar mental organisation. Each heart has its own idiom, and ideas thus illustrated a child will assimilate faster because they are congenial to his nature.

To rear a nation to its full stature upon foreign thought is impossible. Even in an æsthetic point of view, nothing great or original will ever result from it, much less will it awaken the national pride, hereditary heroism or self-respect, at all times necessary in those who would advance their country's glory. Germany tried to live upon foreign thought for a hundred years or more—English and French, or any thought except their own—but nothing came of it. So at last, headed by those grand iconoclasts, Lessing, Herder, Tieck, Goethe and others, they threw down all the foreign idols, and went back to drink at their own holy wells, their Sagas, Mährchen, and wild lays of the Niebelungen. There they found inspiration, and the free, native tide of thought has ever since poured forth in channels created by its own daring force—the only fitting channels for that wondrous

German mind, at once the profoundest and most imaginative of Europe; while, on the other hand, by stifling the free utterance of native thought, the literature of modern Italy became the most meagre and artificial of Europe—for the Austrian forbade the words country, independence or freedom to be uttered by the subject people. There is a magic might in song. All rulers and despots know this well. Napoleon found its power, when the chorus:

Sit sollen ihn nicht haben, derfreie Deutsche Rhien!

made all Germany fly to arms for the War of Liberation. The songs of the poets become swords in the hands of the patriots. Can it be in fear of this transmutation, that Irish song is not flung into the furnace of young hearts? One can only hazard an hypothesis for the *cause* of this singular omission; but the *fact* can be easily proved by merely looking over the index of the selections. In the long list of poems on home and country there is but *one* by an Irishman, and that merely displaying individual, not national feeling—it is, "Our Native Valley," by Griffin—although the compiler states in the Introduction, and justly, that, "On the love of home is founded that of country, and unless this first of affections is incul-

cated the heart must ever remain selfish, desolate and cold to all social and patriotic feelings." His illustration of these admirable sentiments is by teaching the poor Irish child to chant "The Stately Homes of England." France might as well make "Rule Britannia" her national song, in place of the "Marseillaise," or America rear her youthful population upon "The British Grenadiers."

In the list of "Songs and Lyrics" there is but *one* by Moore, the chief of our poets and our national glory, and that the least characteristic of his melodies. However, in compensation, we have "Ye Mariners of England" and "Scots Wha Hae Wi' Wallace Bled," which, though excellent poetry, could scarcely vibrate through an Irish heart like Moore's grand and solemn appeal:

> Let Erin remember the days of old,
> Ere her faithless sons betrayed her.

In the list of the "Social and Domestic Affections," not one Irish name is to be met with. Not a line from Banim's iron verses, strong and sinewy as a peasant's arm, and passionate as his heart. Nor from Griffin's mournful muse, filled with that deep tenderness yet plaintive Orientalism of resignation so characteristic of Irish sorrow. How in

that poem of his, "The Mother's Lament," one sees the poor old forsaken, desolate, bereaved one rocking herself to and fro, by the chill hearth of her ruined home, while she chants:

My darling, my darling, while silence is on the moor,
And lone in the sunshine I sit by our cabin door;
When evening falls quiet and calm over land and sea,
My darling, my darling, I think of past times and thee!

My darling, my darling, God gave to my feeble age,
A prop for my faint heart, a stay in my pilgrimage;
My darling, my darling, God takes back His gift again,
And my heart may be broken, but ne'er shall my will complain.

Do not these genuine outpourings of an Irish heart call a rush of tender tears to the eyes, which the cold, cultured extracts from "Gertrude of Wyoming," given in the selections, never could awaken?

Amongst the ballads also, a species of composition in which Ireland has won a world-wide fame, there are but two representatives from our country—Moore's "Lake of the Dismal Swamp," and "The Faery Thorn" by Ferguson. The omission of all other distinguished Irish names cannot, however, arise from ignorance; for in his simple

way of always making his prose bear testimony against his verse, the compiler assures us of the deserved popularity of Banim, Callanan, Lover, Davis, etc., amongst the modern Irish writers in this particular department, yet no extract appears from any one of them; and throughout the whole work not a single line from Davis is to be found. The grand and glittering ballad of "Fontenoy," every verse flashing like swords in the sunshine, would give the heart of youth a healthier action, one would think, than "Sweet William's Ghost." Or that other by Davis, where the verse bounds on fierce and beautiful as a panther:

Oh, for a steed, a rushing steed, and a blazing scimitar,
To hunt from beauteous Italy the Austrian's red hussar,
To mock their boasts,
And strew their hosts,
And scatter their flags afar.

Oh! for a steed, a rushing steed, and dear Poland gathered round,
To smite her circle of savage foes, and hurl them to the ground;
Nor hold my hand
While on the land
A foreigner foe was found.

Or is "The Child and Hind," another of the selections, better teaching for the men of the future who are to war and work against the darkness and bigotry of ages than the spirited nationality and noble moral of "The Irish Chiefs," which thrills like a *sursum corda* through the frame:

Oh! to have lived dear Owen's life, to live for a solemn end,
To strive for the ruling strength and skill God's saints to the chosen send;
And to come at length with that holy strength the bondage of fraud to rend,
And pour the light of God's freedom in where tyrants or slaves are denned.

Or "The Muster of the North," by Gavan Duffy, with its fast and fiery rhythm, like the rushing of horses over a rocky causeway; or that spirited Orange chant of "The Maiden City," by Charlotte Elizabeth, coloured with the memories of the other Ulster race, beginning:

Where Foyle his swelling waters
  Rolls northward to the main,
Here, queen of Erin's daughters,
  Fair Derry, fixed her reign.
A holy temple crowned her,
  And commerce graced her street,

A rampart wall was round her,
The river at her feet;
And here she sat alone, boys,
And, looking from the hill,
Vow'd the maiden on her throne, boys,
Would be a maiden still.

Ballads like these light up courage and heroism. A great heart speaks in them, and the child, for the moment, is transformed into the hero. But, alas! native heroism is a *taboo'd* subject to the young national scholar. He may sing of Wallace wight, and the triumph over the Armada, but must not dare to tell how at Fontenoy—

Right up against the English lines the Irish exiles ran—

and conquered, too. But leaving these exciting ballads aside, why is there no illustration of Carleton's thrilling genius given? Would not the exquisite faery music of his legendary ballad of "Sir Turlough"—

The bride she bound her golden hair—
Kileevy, O Kileevy!
And her step was light as the breezy air,
When it bends the morning flowers so fair,
By the bonnie green woods of Kileevy!—

have been a better poetical model, and more fitted for a place in an authorised collection for national purposes, than the infantile lispings of the Misses Davidson of America, "The Shouting Cuckoo," or the feeble, flimsy fripperies of the "Keepsake Era"?

Then we have numerous specimens from a poet of Blackwood, called "Delta"; but of the learned, original mind of Clarence Mangan, there is no trace whatever. Poor Mangan; who spent a weary, sad life illustrating all literatures from Ireland to Irân! and who lives consecrated in the martyrdom of genius, though allowed no place in the Pantheon of Marlborough Street, amongst the Peabodys and Patersons, the Polehills and Wasthills, and Wiffens and Wilcoxes, and other poets of such-like strange and uncouth appellations whom the compiler delights to honour, though where he discovered them (particularly Wiffen, author of "The Shouting Cuckoo") is the grand mystery of the book. It is so sad in all the wide world not to know where to look for Wiffen!

But the selections, even from the best poets, are as unfortunate as the omissions. Moore, for instance, seems more like an improved version of Isaac Watts than the impassioned bard of Ireland

—the quotations from him being principally of sacred pieces, and one "To a Grasshopper." From Keats, "flushed all over with the rich light of poetry," but one poor extract on "Autumn." Were there not "Madeline" and the "Pot of Basil," and those two exquisite odes to a "Grecian Urn" and a "Nightingale" to choose from? But of these not a word.

Then not a line from Motherwell, but an interminable number from that dull Montgomery, beginning with "Autumn," too. All he ever wrote is not worth Motherwell's "Jeannie Morrison." No rich and gorgeous harmonies of Tennyson's from "Locksley Hall" or the "Lady Godiva." No gleam of that sweet vision, the "Queen of the May." Or, "Mariana in the Moated Grange." Only two extracts upon "Autumn" likewise.

"To a Bee," "To a Primrose," "To Autumn," ditto, ditto, ditto, is the staple commodity appended to every name, great and small, down the index.

We turn to Wordsworth—but find only Daisies and Daffodils. Not one tinge of sanctuary splendour. No "Intimations of Immortality," not a "Palm Leaf" from Monckton Milnes. Yet, how beautiful is his poem, "The Flight of Youth":

Alas! we knew not how he went,
We knew not he was going—
For had our tears once found a vent
We had stayed him with their flowing.
It was as an earthquake when
We awoke and found him gone,
We were miserable men,
We were hopeless, everyone!
His impassioned eye had got
Fire which the sun has not—
Silk to feel and gold to see
Fell his tresses full and free,
And engarlanded with bay
Must our youth have gone away.
Though we half remember now,
He had borne some little while
Something mournful in his smile—
Something serious on his brow;
Gentle heart, perhaps he knew
The cruel deed he had to do.

And that other sweet poem of his entitled "Moments":

I lie in a heavy trance,
With a world of dreams without me,
Shapes of shadows dance
In wavering bands about me;
But, at times, some mystic things
Appear in this phantom lair
That at most seem to me visitings
Of truth known elsewhere.
The world is rich, these things are small,

They may be nothing, but they are all.
A sense of an earnest will
To help the lowly living,
And a terrible heart thrill,
If you have no power of giving
An arm of aid to the weak,
A friendly hand to the friendless,
Kind words, so short to speak,
But whose echo is endless.

These are verses to set as jewels in the heart, but while the noblest poets are ostracised, we find plenty of Mickles and Millars and Mudies, and what they said.

Hogg's name is there, but no bright fragment from his "Bonnie Kilmeny," the sweetest poem of modern Scotland. From Coleridge—the visionary Coleridge—we have only "Lines to a Young Ass," not a line from "Christabel," or "The Ancient Mariner," the poem above all others to excite the heart of youth. And Elizabeth Barrett Browning, the great poetess of England—of the world—is not even named. Yet that noble poem of hers, "The Cry of the Children," so full of beauty and agony, of tenderness and sublimity, is excluded to give room for Miss Eliza Cooke's lines to a Buttercup, and Miss Hannah Gold's to a Crocus.

There are pale young faces enough around us, marred with want, misery and famine, and sad young hearts from desolated homes, to realise Mrs. Browning's mournful description:

Do you hear the children weeping, O, my brothers,
  Ere the sorrow comes with years?
They are leaning their young heads against their mothers,
  And *that* cannot stop their tears.
The young lambs are bleating in the meadows,
  The young birds are chirping in the nest;
The young fawns are playing with the shadows,
  The young flowers are blowing toward the west;
But the young, young children, O, my brothers,
  They are weeping bitterly!
They are weeping in the playtime of the others,
  In the country of the free.

And well may the children weep before you;
  They are weary ere they run;
They have never seen the sunshine or the glory,
  Which is brighter than the sun.
They know the griefs of men, but not the wisdom;
  They sink in the despair without the calm,
Are slaves without the liberty in Christdom,
  Are martyrs by the Pang without the Palm;
Are worn as if by age, yet unretrievingly,
  No dear remembrance keep;
Are orphans of the earthly love and heavenly—
  Let them weep! Let them weep!

Poor L. E. L. is somewhat better treated. But

she has written verses more attractive to youth than some we find here; for instance, her spirited, clanging lines on the death of Alexander, surrounded by

> His silver-shielded warriors,
> The warriors of the world!

And "The Graves of a Household," by Mrs. Hemans, might surely have claimed a place, of which Monckton Milnes says so beautifully:

> There's not a line but hath been wept upon.

Of Shelley's "Sensitive Plant" there are only half-a-dozen verses given. Its fine sensibilities no doubt shrank from keeping company with a Mr. Hurdis, who says:

> I love to see the little goldfinch pluck
> The groundsel's feeble seed, and twit and twit and twit.

Neither is the arrangement the best that could have been chosen for the advantage of students. The classification by subjects is fatiguing in the extreme. One grows wearied by the monotony of a series of similar objects, or on the same subject. Dr. Johnson speaks all our feelings when he says:

"One ode, sir, is well enough, but half-a-dozen of them together makes one very sick." Beside the poems ranged under different metaphysical heads, we have an animal series (so long that it seems a rhymed bill of lading for the ark) and a vegetable series, and another to fish. Surely, none but graziers from a cattle show could get through poems to a ram, to a lamb, and to an ass, following in consecutive order as they do here. Then come a great number of cuckoos, but these all appear to be by Wiffen; and amongst the ichthyological specimens we find a sonnet to a gudgeon, by some anonymous writer, the compiler actually leaving out the names of such men as Davis, Carleton and Mangan, to make room for a sonnet to a gudgeon!

In addition to the weariness which such an arrangement induces, it deprives the student of the opportunity which a chronological order gives for becoming familiar with the eras of the language, and the mental history of the nation at each successive period. The Saxon, the Latin, the French, and the Teutonic styles of composition in English Literature are as clearly defined as the successive orders of architecture; but these distinctions of style, and the psychological phenomena of which they are the exponent, are wholly lost by the want

of a chronological arrangement. The poetry of an age is generally the completest expression of the mind of that age, the ultimate and most perfect formula to express the height to which thought has reached. It incarnates the highest ideal to which the soul of humanity, viewed in its unity, had sprung, and gives definite form to those vague perceptions of the new regions of thought to which it is travelling. It is not merely the result of the spirit of an age, but the spirit itself. Not alone the actual, but the tendencies. Poetry is, in fact, the chanted spiritualism of an age; whether that spiritualism be as full of faith and earnestness as the sixteenth, and first half of the seventeenth century; as frivolous, false and materialised as the eighteenth; or as daring and transcendental as the philosophic creeds of our own day. Whatever faith or hope exists in any age, will be found condensed or sublimated in the poetry of that era. But from the arrangement of these selections no definite idea can be gained of the peculiar characteristics of each successive century.

The biographies of the poets form the third volume of the work. They are interesting, useful and well executed, and it must be acknowledged that wherever the editor speaks in his own person,

it is with sense and judgment. Indeed, his prose displays so much of the qualities in which his selections are deficient, that we must impute the failure of the latter to some stern political necessity; some dark and secret threatenings, some official baton suspended over his head, which forced him, in defiance of all good taste, to send forth a collection which almost justifies Hallam's sarcasm on these works in general, that they seem compiled on the principle of excluding everything which is good.

THE VISION OF THE VATICAN.

(*A Study from Victor Hugo's Poem*, "Le Pape.")

"The Lord of Tears," "the stormy voice of France," as Tennyson finely designates the great Poet of Freedom, never denounced wrong and tyranny with more powerful invective than in this fine poem, which in its full expression of Sin and Sorrow may be called "The Drama of Humanity."

Yet there is no actual life or movement, the scenes are visions only, supposed to pass before the mind of the Pope as he sleeps in his chamber in the Vatican, and they are flung as pictures on the mystic background of night and dreams, each vision representing a separate and distinct phase of human life.

First the kings of Earth pass before him in their purple splendour; then the Prelates in their sacerdotal pomp and pride, and after them the great stream of humanity sweeps by: the poor, the sinful, and the sorrowing; the sheep without a shep-

herd, hunted by the wolves; the tempted and the outcast; the victims of want and misery, driven to crime by despair; and with fierce and scathing anathemas, the Pontiff in his dream denounces the sin robed in purple that receives the homage of the crowd, and contrasts it with the sin born of want and hunger that is expiated on the scaffold.

The language is bold and beautiful. Every line shows a terrible impatience of wrong, with an infinite disdain for the vain pomp of life; for the whited sepulchres filled with all uncleanness, and for all that is false, mean and shallow in our Social System. With superb audacity the poet rends the veil from the world's lies and the hypocrisy of the world's masters, and shows to King, Priest and Ruler what they ought to be, but are not. The Priesthood had accused him of Atheism, he retorts by showing the pride and greed of the Church, and the darkness and bondage in which it holds men's souls; the Kings had accused him of stimulating Anarchy, he retorts by showing how every throne is set upon a writhing, tortured people, and every royal robe is trailed in blood.

But there is no reckless democratic rage in his teaching. No effort to reach regeneration through destruction.

After the denunciation comes the strong clarion call from the poet's lips arousing the people to a sense of the true uses of life, and the infinite beauty of those grand words—Light, Justice, Liberty—to which all heroic lives have been consecrated; words that mean emancipation from ignorance, servility and oppression, and the uprising of a nation or of a human soul into the nobler life of truth, dignity, knowledge and self-reverence.

Never is Victor Hugo's eloquence more powerful than when he preaches the great gospel of human brotherhood, the divine sympathy of man with man, which should be the moving principle of all social life; the true fraternity based on the recognition of the holy and eternal rights of man. "Peace on Earth" is the Christ-word he would make a reality in its fullest sense, for in the new social state of which the poet dreams there shall be no more war, nor oppression, nor crime born of want and misery; no pride of life while the people starve; no lights burning on the altar while the nations sit in darkness.

Help for the weak; pity for the sinning; justice for the wronged—these are the gifts he would have kings and priests lay on the altar of humanity, and above all, he demands Light for the nations, even

as light was first struck from chaos before an organic world could be evolved.

The first scene opens in the Pope's chamber in the Vatican with a mystic invocation to sleep:[1]

When weary men and women, all who live
And bear life's galling fetters on their limbs,
Find peace and rest at last.

A voice is heard from Heaven:

Sleep now and take your rest
From the dark tumult of a weary life,
While like a silver lamp within a tomb,
God's spirit comes to light the death-like form.

The Pope sleeps, and the Kings appear in his dream and salute him.

Hail to thee, Pope! We are the Kings of Earth,
All powerful—the Masters of the World.
We stand upon the summit of all life,

[1]There is no attempt at strict verbal accuracy in these translations. The object is simply to give an idea of the tendency and scope of the poem by a free paraphrase of some of the most striking passages. The rich cadence of Victor Hugo's verse none can emulate, "the thunder and the music of the line," but his strong thoughts are like golden sands, and may be gathered without loss of lustre. So I have endeavoured to collect a few in this rough English casket, as they glittered by me in the stream of his eloquence.

Supreme as Horeb or as Sinai;
A mighty chain of mountains robed in light,
Elect of God, and crowned by His own hand.

The Pope:—I see no summit in the world save one,
And there God stands. There is no king save God,
But ye, what are ye? Men like other men,
Poor fleeting shadows of a passing day,
God's sacred sign is not upon your brow.
The mountains have the glory of the sun,
But ye are robed in darkness like the night.
Your thrones are vile. Your purple reeks of blood.
There is for man but one throne, purity;
One garment, love; one law for all the world,
Light, Justice, Truth. These are the Rights of Man.

The Kings:—Yet thou, too, art a king, elected, crowned,
What is thy work on Earth?

The Pope:—To serve and love.
I blush to wear this triple crown of gold,
And dwell amidst my prostrate worshippers,
Like a dumb idol in this glorious shrine,
For what am I to be enthroned like God?
Will not the Judgment come?

He advances to the portal of the Vatican and addresses the assembled crowd:

Oh! people, trembling in these servile chains,
Help me to break your bonds of servitude.
See how I rend my royal golden robe,
And fling away these sandals from my feet,

Soiled by the lips of kings. Now we are equal.
Now I go forth alone where Heaven may lead;
Through storm or tempest, cloud, or sun, or rain,
To tread the stony places of the world,
And learn the mystery of suffering.
Romans, I leave you Rome! Henceforth I reign
Over Christ's kingdom only; deathless souls
Who bear the standard of humanity
Through want and woe and scorn and bitter tears.
Farewell to splendour! People, let me pass!
My path is in the track of Christ. Farewell!

In the next scene the Pope, robed in serge, and, bearing a wooden crucifix in his hand, enters the eastern Synod. The Patriarch in his golden robes and crown, surrounded by the Bishops, rises from his throne to bless the people.

The Patriarch:—I bless the tribes and cities of the world;
The vales and hills; the mountains and the sea;
All peoples; earth and heaven.

The Pope:—Rather bless hell!
Ay, priest, bless want and misery and tears
From broken hearts. Bless tempted erring spirits
Warring with wrong, yet falling in the combat.
Bless the chained gangs of sullen tortured souls
Made devils ere they knew their rights as men.
Bless the faint hearts with only strength to suffer;
The wronged, the weak, the outcast and the sinning.
Bless all for whom no lips have ever prayed,

For these make up the sum of human life.
Therefore, I say, bless hell!

The PATRIARCH:—Who is this man?
The Bishop of the West? Robed as for death!

The POPE:—And wherefore not? I mourn for human sin;
Still more for human pride and pomp like thine,
Amid the world's great sorrows. Cast aside
This golden robe; this glittering diadem;
Thy velvet, damasks, pearl embroideries
Are chords to strangle Christ. These priceless gems
Are tears of widowed mothers, orphan'd babes.
Thy rubies are the blood-drops of the people.
Doth not the pale Christ, with His crown of thorns,
Rebuke thy sinful vanity and pride?
Look at the people crouching in their lair,
Maddened by want and hunger. Stalwart men
Hunted by demons down the waste of years;
Wan, naked children sobbing in the streets;
Pale women bartering their youth for bread.
Each hour a soul is passing to the judgment—
Souls to be saved or damned! Hast thou, O priest,
Gone down to hell to save them? taught the kings,
As priests should do, that sacred human rights
Mean honour, dignity and honest toil;
The holy joys of home and innocence,
Not luxuries that make our toiling men
But devil's tools and ministers, because
The rich have vices and the poor want bread?
Think you God's priesthood should look calmly on

While tyrants rivet chains, and evil laws
Degrade men to the level of a slave?
You traffic in the sanctuary, and set
Your foot upon the people for a base,
That so the kings may trample them to dust.
Swing silver censers, let the incense rise
In perfumed clouds to heaven! flash the blaze
Of all your altar lights upon the scene!
You cannot hide the hideous wrongs of men
From God's swift searching glance.

The Patriarch and the Bishops vehemently express dissent.

The Patriarch:—Most saintly Pope,
The laws are graven on brass, we cannot change
The ancient form and usage of the Church;
Besides, the people like our splendid rites,
The glory of the altar is their sun,
Our mitres flash like stars upon their eyes.

1st Bishop:—And speak of kings with reverence! their swords
Cast the same shadow as the cross. God's temple
Is founded upon kings; if kings should fall,
God will fall with them.

2nd Bishop:—Ay, in truth we know
The people are but sheep and must be driven.
Two powers only rule on earth—the priest,
Head over all, and secondly the king.
The ploughshare must be sharp to cut deep furrows.

Leave it to us! the priests of God know best
How deep to cut that so good seed may grow.

3rd Bishop:—And cease this cry of "knowledge for the people"!
Books, schools and science! What! to make men think?
They do not need to think; dogma is everything.
Anathema on him who dares to doubt.
If they would reach us in the sanctuary,
It must be on their knees. Let us not fear
To burn up heresy as though a torch
Were flung into a field of straw.

The Patriarch:—Beware!
You drag the people down to an abyss
By this word Liberty. It is perdition!
Bowed heads and humble hearts are all we need;
Obedience to the priest and to the king.
To think, to judge, to reason, and to doubt
Is blasphemy—the primal sin of man,
That cost him Paradise! and God will cause
All words and works to be accursed of those
Who preach this vain word Progress to the people.

The Pope:—O Brother, clearer vision comes to me.
Can Dogma save them? From my splendid height
I looked down on a seething gulf of crime,
Black smoke of Hell that darkened all the land,
And poisoned even the incense on the altar.
Cries as of murdered souls went up to Heaven.
I saw the reign of Sin—the death of Innocence,
Vice set on high and Virtue in the mire;

Christ's sheep left foldless and no shepherd near
To guide, to save, to comfort or to bless,
And make God visible to human eyes.
So I have flung my earthly glories down,
What has God's priest to do with luxuries?
Vain cheats, foul frauds—I fling them to the poor!
I will not take my place amongst the Kings
Upon whose thrones rests everlasting darkness,
Kings, Princes, Pontiffs, Sovereigns, Cæsars;
Weird shadows, hollow words, dead Phantoms robed
As living men, like idols in our churches,
False gods that brutalise the worshippers.
Shall we take all the people's holy rights—
Light, knowledge, freedom, justice, happiness,
And sell them to the kings who build their thrones
On corpses, and fling hecatombs to death
To buy another jewel for their crown?
Trampling on Christ to honour Attila.

The Bishops:—Blasphemy! blasphemy!

The Pope:— Peace, proud prelates,
Peace! You outrage Heaven. O Christ, come down!
By all Thy seven wounds we plead to Thee,
Give back Humanity its rights, despoiled
Of all God's gifts and disinherited
By Kings and Priests. O, people, women, children,
Have they not souls? have they not human rights?
Arise, O Priests, be on the side of God,
Build up a temple, holy, pure, sublime
With innocence and truth. The Lord Himself
Will be the light thereof, and every heart
A living stone on which God's name is graved.

The Patriarch and the Bishops rise up tumultuously and rush from the scene.

What! vanished like a vision of the night!
The phantoms fled that strove to be as gods!
So Babel fell through pride and vain ambition.
No priest—no temple! Must I work alone
In the dense darkness of this sea of sin?

A Voice from Heaven:—Have Faith and trust in God.
The Lord is with thee!

The Pope leaves the Synod and goes forth on his mission of charity and love; ministering to all who sin and suffer, and bringing peace to those who, through much sorrow, had begun to doubt God. The people gather round him with wonder while he speaks words of comfort and compassion.

The Pope:—O People, I have left my royal state
To learn the bitter sorrows of the poor,
The woe, the wrongs, the agony, the tears,
The bitter desolation called your life,
Days without bread and nights made black with crime,
Unlit by any ray of love or sympathy;
Your wounds that none bind up, your souls none save;
Your roofless homes, your fireless hearths, your cries
That stifle Hell, your sins that startle Heaven.

Come, troubled hearts made mad by want and scorn,
I bring you love for hate. I share your life,
And give you of my gifts—Light, Freedom, Hope;
The knowledge of the birthright you have lost.
Come, soul-stained outcasts; trampled, bleeding slaves.
Come, all that men have shunned, that men despise,
That men have cursed. Come, all who weep and mourn,
I will present each suffering soul to God
And plead for ye before the Sacred Throne.

The crowd press round with tearful prayers.

A PASSER-BY:—What means this pauper multitude, old Priest?

The POPE:—I gather priceless treasure for the Lord.

In his dream the Pope beholds the building of a Temple, while the Archbishop gives his orders to the builders.

The ARCHBISHOP:—Bring jaspar, onyx, sapphire, porphyry;
Make the gate splendid and the portal high,
That all may enter, all the people stand
Amid the glittering glory before God.
On the august façade flash forth in gems
The name "JEHOVAH," as if traced in fire.
Ring out the bells like choral harmonies

Sending vibrations to the inmost soul;
And all things be in reverent order,
Christ's Bishop seated on his golden throne,
Christ in the stable; and the holy Priests,
Let them have soft warm cushions as they kneel
To expiate your sins.
Bring costly gems,
Jewels for crowns, and flowers for festivals;
Gather all beauty of the earth and heaven,—
Statues like gods, Madonnas, Prophets, Saints,
Divine as Raphael, strong as Michael Angelo;
Resplendent frescoes, all the walls ablaze
With the great story of Humanity:
The trees of Eden with their golden fruit,
And the fair Woman as she tempted Man;
The Builders piling rocks to mount to heaven;
Moses on Sinai, Christ on Golgotha;
Belshazzar's feast and Cana's wedding wine.
The wealth of kings, the splendours of the world
Were all too little for our holy Church,
Our altar and our priesthood.

The Pope:— And the poor?
Will they find shelter in the winter night,
Amid your statues and your porphyries?

He meditates over the doom and curse that rests for ever on human destiny.

Nothing but evil seems the law of life:
The People writhing in their dull despair,
And Princes, Nobles, Judges, Warriors, Priests,
All working out the tragedy of man.
The morning bids him weep, the night says die;

Sin, suffering, tears,—the sum of human life,
The doom of all the worlds, of all Creation.
This is the creed that all religions teach—
Sorrow on Earth, eternal fire hereafter!
O fatal shadow thrown on life from Hell
By rituals of falsehood and despair,
The dogma of Damnation! Wrath and hate
Poured on our race throughout Eternity!
A darkened life, a dark abyss beyond—
If Man, a tortured, bound Prometheus;
If Angel, a thrice cursed Lucifer.
O helpless mortals in the grasp of fate,
Can we not claim some higher rights from God,
Than tears on Earth, and Hell for evermore?

A flock of shorn sheep pass by, while the wild winter wind is raging. The Pope regards them with pity.

Poor shorn flock! poor trembling shivering crowd!
What hand has shorn you of the sacred fleece
God gave you as your right, and left you bare
To the wild driving of the pitiless rain?
Will not a curse rest on the impious heads
Of those who left you naked to the blast?
So on for ever, on through life's fierce storm
The mournful march of sad humanity,
Toiling and working, suffering, weeping, dying,
Naked while weaving royal robes for Kings,
Homeless while building granaries for others.
O People, ye who feed, clothe, nourish all,
The worthless and the idle are your masters,
They grind your lives down for their pleasuring;

Body and soul and brain, the rich seize all.
Where are the Shepherds whom the world calls
Priests?
Can they not save you from the hands of those
Who take the wool and then will take the flesh?
O dark-winged angels of remorseless fate,
Why this eternal war upon the poor;
Why must the shadow fall upon their lives
So darkly that it blots out all the sun?

The next scene is a battlefield; the Pope stands between the two armies and speaks:

What! must we give these fields of living men,
To be mowed down as wheat is by the scythe,
That Kings may make a footstool of the dead
To mount to thrones? They grasp at diadems,
And care not if the jewels drip with blood.
Aye, seize your lands, as wolves their living prey.
Send forth your fiat, bid the trumpets sound,
And tell the people 'tis a glorious thing
To die for Kings. But I through blinding tears,
I see your royal raiment trailed in blood,
The red plain strewn with dead and dying men,
The trampled fields, the burning villages,
The women weeping for their slaughtered sons.

He advances between the combatants with uplifted hand.

O People, break the chain, be strong and cease
To tremble at the shadow of a King!
Fling down your swords, and boldly say, as men:

"We will not sell our lives to purchase thrones,
And leave our children orphans, for the sake
Of building up an empire for the Kings."
And who are ye who do the murderous work,
And kill to order? Men with brain and hand
And power and might, the workers of the world;
True Titans of the gods and of Humanity.
And yet you give your manhood to be ruled
By these poor phantom shadows called the Kings;
Who laugh and eat and hold high festival,
And gaily wreathe the cup of blood with laurel,
While earth is strewn with dead, and drenched with tears.
You robe them, crown them, pay them from your toil,
Shrine them in gorgeous palaces, and then
Fall down before the gods of your own making.
Ye, the great movers of this vast machine
Called Human Progress! Ye, who have upheld
By your strong work and arm, the thrones of Kings!
Ye, root and leaves of the great tree of life,
Without whose aid the world would come to naught!
All-powerful People, mighty world-sustainers,
Rest but for one day idle, leave your work,
And the whole fabric falls!
Beware, O Kings!
The People yet may know their power, and then
The cry of suffering humanity
For retribution of their ancient wrongs
Will startle earth, and reach the ear of God.
You stifle thought and bind revolt in chains,
And raise your scaffolds by your palaces

Amid the people's deep anathema;
In every age the same environment
Of wrong, and wrath, and torture, and despair,
And edicts traced in blood. But nothing done
To help the blinded, sinning, suffering soul,
To rise to human happiness through Love.
Each generation sends its bitter cry
Up to the silent heaven, ere it falls
Into the depths of everlasting darkness.
Yet still the wrong remains, the fetters gall;
The vengeance, and the sorrow, and the doom
Make human life more terrible than death.
The kings alone are sacred as the gods,
They set their feet on slaves, their thrones on tyranny,
And priests will preach to us of "Right Divine."
Tiberias before Christ! Yet what are kings—
The Bourbon, Hapsburg, Brunswick, Romanoff—
But idols men create, and men can crush,
If only they demand their rights as men?
But unjust laws, brute force, and grinding care
Stifle the life in nations: soul-crushed slaves,
They fall below the level of the beast,
While if they strive to give back blow for blow,
They're gagged and chained, and beaten with many stripes.

The Pope beholds a scaffold, and the executioner waiting for the victim. He asks the reason.

The EXECUTIONER:—He slew a man.

The POPE:—And, therefore, you slay him.
A crime to expiate a crime! Oh, give

The sinning soul some time for penitence.
Repentance purifies, but not revenge.
What right have you, O Judges of the Land,
To take the life God gave, the sacred life
You never can restore, and call it justice?
God is more merciful; He sends old age,
The silent calm of passionless old age,
To bend the heart to penitence, and through
The sorrow for the sin work out salvation.
But you defraud the sinner of his rights,
And take from him the two sole ways of pardon—
Time and remorse. God knoweth best the hour
To strike the doom of death. Leave him to God.
Why should men dare to send a sinner hence
Before God calls him to the judgment seat,
With all the awful angels looking on;
Ere yet the baptism of grace had cleansed
The stain of sin that lies upon his soul?
If the dread past is shadowed dark with crime,
Give him the time to pray; to lift his eyes
Out of the blackness of a ruined life
Up to the pitying heaven—where Christ stands
Pleading for sinners by the throne of God.
He may repent—give him the time for tears,
One hope, one gleam of pardon for the past,
One moment of God's sunshine on his soul,
Ere he is sent into the gulf of death.

In the terrible misery of humanity the poet finds the true cause that leads to crime; and the chief sin, he maintains, rests not on the people, but on those who have driven the people to despair. Thus he justifies his fierce war against the greed of

kings, the pride of the priesthood, and the selfish oppression of the rich; the purple and fine linen of Dives, while Lazarus is dying at his gate. In every age the great world leaders have lifted the standard of battle against wrong and tyranny, and Victor Hugo's noble poem is a grand hymn of revolt against the existing state of society, with all its awful contrasts and insolent luxury and bitter poverty. He sees—

> Down in the depths, a mass of living men
> Groping and grovelling for their daily bread.

But Society with its vain traditions, and the Church with its formal ritual, give no help to the abject sorrow of the poor. Some great social revolution seems necessary to lift them from the moral and physical degradation of their darkened lives. Meanwhile the poet can but counsel resignation:

> Patience! God's hour will come. I lift mine eyes
> And see the Saviour standing by the throne.

And He hears, though none heed—

> Up from the depths, the ceaseless, bitter cry
> Of disinherited humanity.
> He will have pity, for He drained the cup
> Of human sorrow upon earth, and knows

The soundless depths of human suffering,
The bitter woes that tempt a soul to sin.

The last scene is entitled, "The Entry to Jerusalem," in which is depicted the glorious destiny of humanity as it might be, if Kings, Priests and Rulers were true to their mission as guides, teachers and saviours of the people.

The Pope:—I preach to all men the great reign of Christ:
Right, Justice, Truth; the full equality
Of man with man before the face of God;
True liberty made perfect through the laws
That guard the rights of others as our own.
No ignorance, no fratricidal wars,
No want, no misery, no darkened souls
Made brutal by despair—therefore no crime,
And, if no crime, no scaffold.
Let the rich
Learn the true use of riches is to give,
And all who suffer by their own deep woe
Teach pity for the sorrows of another.
The darkest fate can be made beautiful
By those great angels of Redemption, Grace,
Mercy and Love. They raise the meanest life,
And give the darkest sunshine.
I have trod
The loftiest heights of splendour, King and Priest,
Yet now I give back Rome, and take Jerusalem,
The sacred, mystic city of the soul,
As my true heritage. I leave the Vatican

And choose my place on Calvary with Christ,
To work and suffer for humanity.
The dying Christ, and not the living kings,
Will give me power to raise the trampled crowd,
And make life's darkness luminous through love.
O, workers of the world, true splendour rests
Not on the palace—'tis a charnel-house
Where all divinest things lie slain and buried—
But in the holy strength of noble deeds.
The holy words, Truth, Duty, Sacrifice,
Fill Earth with light as Heaven is lit by stars,
And, through the mournful mysteries of Fate,
Diffuse the Godlike grace of love and purity,
So shall true freedom come upon the earth.

The PEOPLE:—Father, we thank thee for Thy blessed words.

The POPE (awakening from his sleep):—What mystic visions I have had to-night!

So ends this strange and powerful drama; this divine dream of a noble soul filled with pity for the wrongs of man, but illumined by a sublime faith in the splendid possibilities of our race when redeemed and sanctified by Light, Justice and Freedom; and that supreme moment of human history is reached when Humanity becomes at last the true Incarnation of Divinity.

SUITABILITY OF DRESS.

Nothing, in general, bewilders or tortures the female mind more than the endeavour to establish some kind of harmonic relation between the law of the fashion book and the law of life, the one being for the idler, the other for the worker. Yet with some resolute self-assertion and heroic defiance of conventional prejudice, a compromise might be effected, the result being increased comfort to the workers in life's thorny paths without even the sacrifice of beauty. Rather would a fresh beauty be added to woman by the fitness and propriety of costume, always so pleasant to the wearer, and so agreeable to the eye of the artistic spectator.

The Roman Catholic Church, that so well understands the working of the innermost wheels of our complex human nature, at once recognised the truth that dress and vocation should be in harmony, and that besides being a symbol, dress should be a help. Hence the soft, simple, shroud-

ing robes of the holy sisterhoods, where nothing is permitted of showy material or marked delineation of form to jar upon penitent humility, or to irritate the sad and sick, the weary-hearted or world-worn, but everything in the costume is grave, calm and noiseless, to soothe and lull like low music. Loud dressing, the glare of colour, the rustle of starch, the *frou-frou* of silk, are all such cruel discords, when mind and body are lying faint and weak and low, while the soft woollen robes that glide and float with soundless motion are entirely sympathetic and soothing.

Even Protestantism—stern, cold and logical—is beginning to find out the value of those subtle influences that act on the nerves, and excite or calm emotion through other agents than logic and reason, so the Protestant sisterhoods have adopted almost universally the robes suitable to works of mercy and charity, of soothing and healing. All the reckless experiments of vanity are being replaced by the grace and harmony that lie in fitness and suitability.

In another large class of workers the study of dress as influencing nerve power is of vast importance. It has been computed that about sixteen thousand women in London live by literature;

that is, there are amongst us sixteen thousand bundles of abnormal nerves and sensibilities and quivering emotions, fiery fancies, tumultuous passions, and throbbing brains, all working day and night to formulate themselves into words. Now, it is well known that to aid the process of composition, all literary people require a peculiar diet—light, cool and simple; so do they require a peculiar style of dress—cool and simple also.

Fashion is an idol they can never worship. To them whatever impedes the continuity of thought is suicidal. While weaving garments for the children of their brain, they must fling aside all care for the garments of the body. Time is to them a golden sand that cannot be wasted, and the process of an elaborate toilette might utterly efface from the mind all the thick-coming fancies that must be caught flying, or they will come no more.

For this reason Georges Sand, the great French authoress, never wore but one style of dress, a black silk. She said that she could neither waste her time on fashion, nor her temper on rivalry with other women in the matter of dress, so when she accepted invitations to large assemblies she stipulated for a separate boudoir where she could receive a select circle of brilliant thinkers and friends

without the necessity of clothing herself in any unusual paraphernalia.

The literary dress should, in fact, be free, untrammelled and unswathed. As simple and as easily adjusted as Greek drapery, and fastened only with a girdle or a brooch. No stiff corselet should depress the full impulses of a passionate heart. There should be no false coils upon the head to weigh upon the brain, no fuzzy furze bush on the brow to heat the temples and mar the cool logic of some grand, deep thought. And the fewer frills, cuffs and cascades of lace the better, for ink-spots do not improve Venetian point, and in moments of divine fury or feverish excitement the authoress is often prone to overturn her ink-bottle.

Nothing to mind, nothing to care about; no bondage, through fashion or vanity, either on soul or body, should be the law of dress for literary women.

The comfort of an easy, well-known garment to the literary worker is amusingly illustrated by Diderot in one of his letters. A grand new scarlet dressing-gown had been given to him, but bitterly he laments the loss of the old one it replaced.

"What induced me to part with it!" he exclaims. "It was made for me, and I for it. It moulded

itself to all the turns of my body without fretting me. It was picturesque and beautiful. There was no want to which its complaisance did not lend itself, for indigence is very obsequious. Were a book covered with dust, one of the lappets was ready to wipe the dust away. If the ink refused to flow freely from my pen, it proffered a fold. You saw traced on it in long black lines the man of letters, the writer, the worker, and now—I only look like a rich idler. I was the absolute master of my old robe. I am now the slave of my new one. Care wraps me about. I do not weep or sigh, but I say, Cursed be the costly robe that I stand in awe of. Alas! where is my old, my humble, my obliging piece of homespun?" and so on, with much humour but real truth, he laments in a right pleasant way the bondage of fine clothes that kills thought and tames the spirit. Freedom from all petty social observances and fashions is also one of the chief instincts of all mental workers, hence the tendency amongst male writers to long hair and loose necktie; and certainly no inspiration could have come to the Pythia had she worn a corselet and hoop.

But it is comparatively easy to theorise on the fitting dress for saints or authors; their line of life

and work is so distinctly marked. It is not so easy to lay down a law suitable to ordinary daily life. Wives and mothers will always find it difficult to dress suitably for visits of inspection to the nursery and the kitchen, and at the same time elegantly enough to receive chance visitors in the drawing-room.

Balzac had the worst opinion of a woman who came down to him from the nursery fashion-finished with cost and care. It gave him the idea that she was vain and heartless, and not attending to her duties. He would have preferred hair tossed by baby fingers, dress crumpled by baby caresses.

As a rule, for the domestic employments, something light and inexpensive, yet bright and gay, should be selected; if easily spoiled as easily replaced. Something to poetise by colour and glow the prosaic monotony and ugliness of daily cares. And as to visitors, they must be left to a fixed reception day. No lady who has any regard for time or study or employment should permit the disintegration of her day by casual visitors, who come in, probably, because they were passing, or because they were too early for the train, or because, in fact, they were idle and idling, and had

no remorse in wasting moments very precious to thinkers and doers.

For afternoon receptions black should be sedulously avoided, either for the receiving or received. Black is unlovely and unbecoming to everyone, especially to Englishwomen, with the delicate half tints of their colouring, and the murky grey of the atmosphere. Besides, it absorbs the light and spoils the effect of rooms, making it difficult to light them. Nothing can be more dreary at afternoon teas than rows of opaque, black bundles along the walls of a drawing-room, like masses of hummocky ice, particularly when black bonnets and black veils are added. White bonnets and white veils, on the contrary, are bright and pleasant, and give a soft, cloud-like atmosphere to the rooms by which all faces are beautified, and whatever colouring may be in eyes, lips, cheek, and hair is heightened and intensified.

Englishwomen seem to have a fatal predisposition towards black, and having reached the middle-term, the *mezzo-cammin'* of life, generally retire into a black alpaca for the remainder of their days. This voluntary adoption of the symbol of doom is very sad; they ought to remember that variety of dress and the refreshing brightness of colour is

charming at all ages, and fills house and home with a flush of gladness and joy which almost replaces the loss of youth. One of the great beauties of the Court of Louis Quatorze, as she grew old, adopted all the delicate shades of colour for her dress, but never black. Age, she said, was sombre enough; why make it more so by dress? And, coquette to the last, she gave loveliness even to the shadows of advancing years by the exquisite pale greys and lilacs of her costume that changed darkness to light and made every room more beautiful in which she moved. Perhaps the influence of Her Majesty has led to this general adoption of black in London as the national dress. For the Queen has never been seen by her subjects since her widowhood but as a mass of black; dress, bonnet, gloves, parasol, all shrouded in the same deep and mysterious gloom. The Queen is probably too intellectual to pay much attention to dress, else she would have effected many desirable changes in her long reign, and abolished many absurd Court usages. For instance, could anything be more dreadful than the custom of low dresses and bare arms at a day drawing-room in the chill air of a freezing February or in the remorseless glare of a noonday sun? Yet, Court etiquette cannot be

broken even for delicate girls or asthmatic dowagers. The Chinese Ambassador, commenting on this in his published journal, expresses surprise at seeing Court ladies almost nude, yet adds that they did not seem to mind it, even when talking to persons of the opposite sex.

The love of external embellishment seems the most universal characteristic of humanity, and should not be discouraged. The South American Indians, with their delicate features and magnificent hair, sweeping the ground like a shadow when one faces the sun; the rude hunters of the Prairies; the graceful Polynesians, with their soft, beautiful eyes, superb hair, and elegant forms, pliant as their own fern palms; the wild Californian, with the long plugs of wood, tipped with feathers, exuding from his ears and nose; or the African princess, in her severely natural costume, consisting of a girdle of wampum, ornaments, fishbones—all alike are under the influence of this master passion; and out of paint, feathers, beads, matting, tattooing, shells and brass buttons, vanity contrives to build up the primary strata of all human emotions. Russian genius has even proved that, with an instinct of adaptation, all things may be turned to beautifiers, as all discords to harmony, by a

skilful hand. Everyone knows Kohl's story of the girl of St. Petersburg, who was dressed up by her mother for the Bride's Fair on Easter Monday, with a row of tablespoons set round her girdle, a necklace of teaspoons and a couple of fish-trowels placed crosswise on her back.

Neither did the Greek women, with all their intellect, nor the Romans, with all their heroism, neglect the fine arts of the toilet. Jewels, gorgeous robes and costly perfumes helped "the poisoning of the dart, too apt before to kill." The Greeks painted their eyes like the Easterns, and stained the fingers rose colour and the lips vermilion. The Roman dress resembled the Oriental, flowing robes of silk and jewels of enormous value; a *Toga,* or ample robe, clasped on the shoulders, and falling in rich folds to the ground; and a stola, a robe with a long train appended to a bodice made to fit the figure; probably the rudiment of our truly unæsthetic modern costume, which violates every principle of artistic beauty in the formation of the figure, and annihilates, as far as possible, all the graceful folds and curves which drapery naturally assumes. Veils were not as indispensable as in the East, but some enhanced their beauty with a shading of rose-coloured gauze, and both men and

women of the higher ranks powdered their hair with gold dust; but this only in the days of the empire, and when Rome was falling, conquered by luxury. Grecian women wore a flowing robe without sleeves, girdled at the waist, and hair braided and sometimes crowned with flowers, and sandals on the feet. Art had only to imitate—it could not improve this costume, where grace, beauty and harmony were made visible to the eye.

A history of dress would be a history of minds; for dress expresses a moral idea; it symbolises the intellect and disposition of a nation. The Saxon women, in their bodice and short petticoat, with a mantle thrown over the head and shoulders, expressed admirably the stern, useful, homely virtues of their race. The Normans introduced corsets, and the high tight bodice like a corslet, embroidered with the family arms on each side, while a veil floated from beneath a coronet to the feet, suiting well with their proud, haughty, formal, brocaded manners. Between the Tudor and Stuart era, dress, like the literature of the time, was a ponderous but gorgeous composite; the Puritans, however, restored it to a simplicity of which Quakerism still remains the symbol. The analogy between the dress and morals of the Resto-

ration is too evident to need comment; while in the high heels, wigs and whalebone of Queen Anne's reign we find the truest exponent of the stilted, false, stiff, artificialised mind and literature of the day. Flour for the hair was introduced by the Hanoverian Georges; for, having little in their heads, they probably thought it the more necessary to put something on them.

The great French Revolution restored dress to the republican simplicity of the tunic, sandals, and braided hair; and now, when minds and states are trembling with vibrations that foreshadow a speedy breaking up of all old, outworn modes of life and thought, dress will, no doubt, become the symbol of the higher cultivation and increased graces of the spirit. For women, as a rule, are always trying to show their sympathy with the movement and tendencies of the age, by the symbolism of dress, since they are prohibited from taking any part in the actual work of life.

Besides, personal adornment is the natural language of female humanity, and by it she evinces her desire to charm, which is the strongest instinct of woman's nature.

The adornment of the head, especially, has always been a matter of much importance amongst

the nations, the principal aim and object being to give dignity to the figure by increasing the apparent height. The circlet of feathers worn by the savage chief, and the golden crown of the mighty monarchs of the world, were adopted to produce this effect, and thus became symbols of sovereignty and power, and inspired awe and reverence, whereas a low, flat head is expressive only of submission and servitude.

A French writer on dress observes, with reference to this subject, that a parting down the middle of the head destroys in a great degree nobility of expression, for it effaces the line of the moral arch, and thus gives the low, depressed outline, so suggestive of the head of the criminal classes.

The long train, also, was invented to give dignity to the figure by simulated height, and was at once adopted by all the royal races for their court ceremonials, as it expresses with superb grace the insolent pride of rank and caste, that would keep all lower humanity at a respectful distance.

But all these distinctive symbols that separate the classes and the masses will soon be extinguished and crushed out by the pressure of the crowd and the ever-increasing claims of social duties upon

our time and the very small span of life we have at our command.

A century ago visiting was a stately social function. A lady of quality had her own sedan chair, kept in the hall of her spacious mansion, and in this, gorgeously attired, she was carried on her round of visits by her own bearers, while a tall footman, with uplifted stick, walked beside, to aid my lady's exits and entrances. It was a charming era of graceful idleness and pleasure for a woman, and her life was summarised thus:

Elle s'habille,
Elle babille,
Elle se déshabille.

But now the visiting list has increased from hundreds to thousands, and includes all America as well as Europe; and there are 85,000 streets in London to traverse, which, if extended in a straight line, as has been calculated, would exceed the diameter of the earth, while overhead fifty tons of soot suspended in the atmosphere materially interferes with all attempts at gorgeous and beautiful apparel. Besides, woman has now a mission, and prefers the platform to the isolation of the sedan chair, and is rapidly taking her place as a leader

in action, an inspirer of new thought, and a power and victor in the war of life. Her aims are to reform the laws, to emancipate her sex and revolutionise society; and with admirable and fluent eloquence she demands the rights due to woman, and denounces the wrongs done by man. But the new modes of thought and action, now advocated by the advanced section of existing womanhood, will gradually, no doubt, generate new habits of social usage. There will be more ease and freedom in mutual intercourse, and less bondage to routine and custom.

Everything will tend to simplify manners and conventional forms, and the life of civilisation may then, after all, become worth living, a true exponent of social comfort and, at the same time, of high mental enjoyment.

THE DESTINY OF HUMANITY.

No speculative subject excites more intense interest at the present day than the future of the human race, especially in relation to those other planets of the great solar system, within whose stern and changeless laws our earth and all the planet worlds are alike inflexibly bound.

Perhaps we have been over-wearied with merely mundane knowledge, and feel the need, as it were, to search the infinite for new subjects of investigation. Curiosity has been satiated here. We know all about the physical condition of the earth, as it has been existing under many mutations for the last ten millions of years or more; everything has been analysed and discussed and proved and tested in the alembic of science, till there are no more mysteries left of the visible world to excite the imagination, or to stimulate research for some yet undiscovered truth. But there is still one awful and gloomy mystery of the invisible world connected with our race which remains unread.

The generations pass in endless succession through the silent gate of death—the wise, the learned, the noble, the good, disappear in the fathomless abyss, and we, standing on the brink in tremour and bewildered fear, await the coming of the Fates—

> Dark-coloured queens, whose glittering eyes are bright
> With dreadful, mournful, life-destroying light—

yet vainly ask of revelation or philosophy for some voice through the silence, some word from the infinite, to tell us if there are other worlds where the soul's energy will find a wider sphere, and the divine intellect still more glorious objects for its splendid powers than it finds on earth.

No proof, however, has yet been found of the existence of inhabited worlds beyond our own, although dim previsions exist in most men's minds that the planets are connected with the history of humanity, both as past and future abodes of the human race, through an endless progression of intelligence in ever-changing forms; and when at night we look into the fathomless star-depths of the infinite, we yearn to know if the spirits of those we loved and lost are dwelling above in some bright world where life is nobler and more beautiful than it is on our sorrow-stricken earth; yet that even

there, so far removed from sin and sorrow, some tender chord of human love may still vibrate in their nature, in sympathy with the tears that dim our eyes as we look upward and think of them with the tender memories that can never die.

This question of life in other worlds, which has such a mystic and powerful attraction for all reflecting minds, first attracted popular attention from the eloquent and emotional manner in which it was treated by Chalmers in his astronomical sermons, and afterwards by the splendid utterances of Whewell and Brewster, in their celebrated essays, "The Plurality of Worlds," and "More Worlds Than One."

In the former, Dr. Whewell, the great antagonist of the habitation theory, maintains that our earth is probably the only abode in the universe fitted for rational beings; and of the planets he affirms that no other except our world has the conditions necessary to highly organised beings. The inner planets are globes of fire; the outer are globes of water and frigid vapour, with scarcely any solid nucleus which could give the means to support life. The moon is a burnt-out cinder, without sea or atmosphere, where the wretched inhabitants, if any existed, would be scorched with intolerable heat,

then frozen with intolerable cold, every alternate fortnight.

The sun—that glorious orb which nations have worshipped as a god—he affirms, is nothing more than a gigantic fiery furnace of red-hot vapour, where life of any kind would be impossible; and the planets are incomplete worlds filled with inorganic material, or, if any organic creatures exist there, they could be only like the first evidences of creation in the slimy productions of the earth's earliest youth, before man appeared.

In Jupiter, for instance, they could be nothing more than fishy, flabby, boneless, gelatinous, hideous creatures, groping their lives out in a twilight of fog and watery vapour, through which the sun would appear merely as a speck of light. And one could scarcely imagine such beings endowed with conscious intelligence; while the planets Uranus and Neptune must exist in that "outermost darkness" which is the Scripture expression for hell, intensified in horror by the duration of their winters, which in Uranus last for forty years, and in Neptune for eighty years, of a human life. Then, in the inner planets next the sun, no life or vegetation could sustain a heat seven times greater than that of our earth, where even metals would be

reduced to a state of fiery vapour. The earth alone, according to his view, has a sufficient solid nucleus to support life—an atmosphere, a temperature and succession of seasons favourable to the manifestation of rational industry and intellect, and the enjoyments suited to a fine and highly sensitive organisation.

In opposition to these theories of Dr. Whewell, Sir David Brewster maintains with great eloquence and arguments drawn both from science and religion, that the omnipotent Intelligence could suit the organisation to the abode, and that the presumption of rational life throughout the solar system is great, from the evidence of compensation to the outer planets for diminished solar light, by the arrangement which supplies them with many moons, and Saturn with a resplendent ring of circling satellites; and he asks: "Could it be believed that through the millions of years of the protozoic and pre-human periods of the world's existence, before man was created, there was not to be found a single rational being in the whole great universe of God?"

Mr. Proctor, a most brilliant writer on these subjects, takes a middle course, and his clear definite views, enforced with spirit and keen argu-

mentative power, deserve the deepest attention. He believes that rational life is a scarce and rare phenomenon in the universe, not existing simultaneously in all the worlds, but manifested occasionally, and then lost, to reappear again when the physical conditions have been reached in other worlds, by which alone rational life, as we know it, can be sustained. The compensation theory he refutes, by showing that the moons of Jupiter scarcely afford any light to their primary, owing to their great distance from the sun; and that the ring of Saturn actually darkens the planet, in place of enlightening it, during half the year.

According to his theory, all the worlds and suns of the universe pass through successive and progressive stages during immense periods of time. At first they are simply accretions of burning vapour, which gradually attract to themselves floating material of planet-forming elements; and, as they cool down, a solid nucleus is formed, and organic life of the lowest type begins to appear. Higher grades follow in succession, but at long intervals, until, finally, a race of beings gifted with conscious intelligence, such as the human, takes its destined place as head and ruler of a perfected world.

Our earth, through millions of years, has been passing through all the progressive stages of formation and completion, until the culminating moment arrived when the highest product of development was manifested in man; but that was only six thousand years ago, so brief is the history of intelligence in the history of worlds. And already the earth is showing signs of decrepitude and lessening vital power. Worlds, like living creatures, have their fiery youth, their full, calm maturity, and their failing age and final death.

Nothing remains steadfast in the universe; all things fluctuate and change. Even the sun is in a process of exhaustion, so that eventually life will fail on the earth, directly by the decay of vital force, and indirectly by the dying out of the solar heat and light which is the source of all planet life; and this world at last will become silent and lifeless, a bleak and barren waste, as the moon is at the present moment.

The progress of civilisation, he adds, is also rapidly consuming the earth-wealth by which men live. The great forests are disappearing from above the soil, and the great coal fields from beneath it. It has been even calculated that in five hundred years the coal will be extinct—a mere

moment in the history of a world, but a moment that will bring consequences of awful import to humanity, for either an entirely new order of things must be established on this earth within the next thousand years for the human race, or the human race itself will perish and become extinct.

Meanwhile, however, other worlds are preparing for the reception of rational beings, and, according to Mr. Proctor, Jupiter, Saturn and the outer planets are even now passing through the fiery stage, which is the azoic period of all worlds, and from which they rise into abodes fit for rational life.

The objection to the possibility of life existing in the remote planets by reason of their immense distance from the sun, he meets by the hypothesis that they are not dark, opaque masses revolving in space, like our earth, but self-luminous suns, lighting up the otherwise thick darkness of the outermost regions of the solar system.

He holds, for instance, that Jupiter, the largest planet of the system, in place of being a huge ocean of fog and mist, is a globe of fiery vapour, giving resplendent light and heat to his circling moons, which are the inhabited portions of the

Jovian system, if there be inhabitants, and which revolve around their primary in the warm glow of an endless spring.

Saturn, in like manner, is a mass of incandescent vapour, giving light and heat to his attendant moons, and to that lustrous ring of countless satellites, so massed together that they seem like one continuous arch of light.

Yet, a time may come when these fiery suns will absorb into their masses the circling satellites, and as the minor worlds are accreted a solid nucleus will be formed as a basis for supporting a new phase of life; the life of the satellites will then gradually die out, but in their place new and splendid worlds will be formed, fitted for the abode of those higher races for whom alone all worlds exist.

These daring theories of a mind, which seemed to see by inner vision the formation, life and death of worlds and sun and systems, are supported by the argument that, as far as our earth is concerned, we know from scientific investigation that the azoic inchoate state of the world lasted for millions of years, while it was passing from the condition of fiery vapour to that of a concrete mass, but six thousand years cover the brief period of its human, historic life; from which Mr. Proctor con-

cludes that "the lifeless gaps in the history of the solar system far exceed the periods of life with which they alternate."

From this view of the succession of vital epochs it seems not improbable that it is our own human race which is destined to pass through all the changes of life and death and resurrection, from world to world of the eight planets connected with the solar system; so that in place of their being a distinct creation, and a new race for each planet, it is humanity itself, ever dying, ever living, that will travel from star to star, from grade to grade, still ascending in the infinite scale of power, intelligence, beauty and moral harmony, until the human becomes almost divine, and reaches at last the glorious promised Heaven within the radiant, central temple of the sun.

It is right to state, however, that in Mr. Proctor's theory the sun is not a habitable world. He considers it as being now only in the first stage of all worlds, that of a mass of burning vapour. Yet others, and not without reason, believe that the sun fulfils exactly that splendid dream of Heaven pictured for us in the sublime description of the seer of Patmos—a glowing world of light and of eternal summer, where there is *no night*. Of no

other body in the solar system can this be predicted. Of the sun alone it is true; there can be no night as he revolves in the unchanging light of his own luminous atmosphere, and for the same reason, no change of seasons. No seed time or harvest; eternal summer must reign for ever there, and the Tree of Life will grow beside the living waters, as the trees by the rivers of Paradise.

"No night" implies also that stated periods of repose after toil for weary workers, and frail, decaying organisms, will not be needed; these are the conditions of labour and of imperfect frames that require constant renovation through sleep. For the perfect organism, not subject to disease or death, there will be eternal youth, without the weariness of exhaustion, or that decadence of vital power which we call old age.

These views are not altogether fanciful; such conditions must exist to some extent in a world where there are no seasons for toil and no nights for rest; and sorrow could hardly find place in a world where youth, beauty, peace and joy, and the divine powers of the intellect were eternal, and subject to neither exhaustion nor decay. The inspired writer describes such a world and calls it Heaven, and one cannot lightly cast aside the be-

lief that the sun may be that destined and glorious home of our race, where "the nations who are saved shall walk in light."

The splendour of the vision is even increased by the recent discoveries of science, which show the magnificence of the spectacle that surrounds the sun. Pillars of light formed of luminous gas spring up vertically on every side to an enormous height like the mighty columns of a temple, then fall down again on the sun like the spray of a fountain, and there assume the forms of gigantic trees rich in branches and dazzling foliage, until gradually the whole magnificent mass sinks down in soft clouds upon the solar surface.

The intense heat, which would make life insupportable, is modified, some philosophers think, by a veil of mist, which, rising from the ground high above the solid nucleus of the sun, forms a majestic dome, beneath which might dwell in safety the glorified races of all the worlds; and it has been supposed that the dark spots seen on the sun are openings in this dome, through which the inhabitants can behold the outer firmament, and the philosophers of earth behold the dark solid body of the sun.

But the sun also, with all its attendant planets,

is moving swiftly through the star-depths to some unknown point, where, perhaps, in the far distant ages the whole solar system will be absorbed by some system still more stupendous, and new cycles of life will commence, of a splendour and power of which the darkened soul of humanity can now form no conception.

The star Sirius, for instance—"the giant sun," as Mr. Proctor calls it—a thousand times larger than the sun of our system, may be the centre to which all worlds are tending, and the centre now of worlds where the inhabitants have a destiny of felicity and perfection of intellect unknown to our limited, dark and blind and storm-tossed existence.

But, however mighty in power and intellect may be the inhabitants of the worlds revolving within the splendours of the magnificent Sirius, they must, in all important points that characterise rational beings, be akin to the human.

It has been proved that the same laws of motion and force, of heat, light, electricity, gravitation, attraction and repulsion pervade the infinite. The Omnipotent Ruler of the universe rules through unchanging physical laws; and the moral laws which guide, control and direct the actions of all

rational existences throughout all the worlds must be as unchangeable and universal as the laws of matter; for the moral nature of man is a manifestation of the moral nature of God, and, therefore, unchangeable in its essence, and eternal in its unity with the divine mind.

There can be no world, however distant, throughout the infinite, where justice, truth, love, mercy, purity, and all that makes human life most beautiful, are not recognised by rational beings as the highest law and rule of life. As Kant has said: "The command, 'Thou shalt not lie,' is not valid for man alone. It is for all rational beings as well as man; for the basis of obligation is not in the nature of man, but *à priori* in the conception of pure reason; and so are all moral laws."

And this thought infinitely ennobles the human race. We are one in nature with all the intelligences of the universe; the difference, as regards power of intellect and holiness of will, may be quantitative, but is not qualitative. Man's life seems no longer mean and isolated; it is an arc in an infinite circle, comprehending all life that draws its being and nature from the divine. Even the identity of the elements that form all the worlds has been demonstrated by the spectroscope,

and revealed to us through the language of light and colour.

We now know that iron and all the metals familiar to earth are found in the planets and in the sun, and with the same properties. Iron especially has been proved to exist in enormous quantities in the sun, so that we may consider it to be an immense magnet suspended in space. But it is worthy of note that, although, from the apocalyptic vision, we are accustomed to associate the idea of the sun with the radiant city—the New Jerusalem—the central temple of our system, whose pavement is of gold, and whose walls are of precious stones, yet the presence of gold amongst the elements that form the mass of the sun has not hitherto been detected.

From the unity of material throughout the worlds of space, we may infer that the modes of utilising it in some manner analogous to the industries of earth exist there also; and, rising still higher, we may infer, from the unity both of material and of law throughout the infinite, the existence of one Supreme Intelligence, all-wise, all-powerful, who has ordained and organised all, and given the initial force which keeps the ever-

moving, ever-steadfast machinery of the universe in eternal and unerring order.

In Mr. Hamilton's interesting and instructive work, *The Starry Hosts*, the question of the habitation of the planets is discussed very ably, and with much convincing force, from a religious point of view. It is, indeed, impossible to approach the subject of astronomy except in a religious spirit. The evidences of infinite wisdom and power are so overwhelming, the scheme of the universe so vast, yet so perfect in its obedience to law, that none but the fool could say in his heart, "There is no God."

"There dwells a noble pathos in the skies,
That warms the passions, proselytes our hearts."

The awful beauty of the star-crowned night, the sublime magnificence of the fathomless infinite of revolving worlds and suns, compel the spirit to adoration, while at the same time we feel with deeper intensity our own high prerogative as a portion of the all-pervading intelligence that fills the universe, deathless in essence, though manifested in ever-changing forms. A great poet has said:

"At night an Atheist half believes in God."

And at such moments the well-known words of Kant may rise to the memory with a fuller sense of their sublimity: "Two things fill the mind with ever new and increasing admiration and awe, the oftener and the more steadily we reflect on them—the starry heavens above, and the moral law within."

And there is truly a striking analogy between the two, for all these revolving unresting worlds are incessantly acted upon by opposing forces, one driving them to chaos, the other drawing them to total absorption within the burning mass of the primary. Yet, from the perfect balance of the tangential and centripetal forces, they are forced to move in that steadfast and harmonious curve round the primary, which, through millions of years, remains unaltered.

So it is with the soul acted on by the opposing forces, the carnal and the spiritual, and which finds its steadfast path alone in the mean, or the *μεσότης*, of which Aristotle speaks as the highest rule of life—the balance of the dual nature of man between the life according to reason and the chaos of a life according to the senses.

And as the worlds of space never traverse the same path twice, but are ever drawn on with their

primaries in an endless spiral towards some unseen, far-distant point, so the soul takes a new standpoint at every step of its infinite progression, and is destined never again to know the path or the past it has once left.

It is along these lines of thought we are led by the earnest, believing tone of Mr. Hamilton's book. No proof can be given that the planet worlds are inhabited; and he does not attempt a proof. It is a great "perhaps," no more, but the arguments he uses from reason, from our knowledge of the Divine mind as revealed to us in Scripture, and from the intuitions of our own nature, are even more convincing to many minds than those based upon scientific data. For science goes but a short way along the shrouded path of infinite mystery, and can affirm only with a hesitating asseverance what may be afterwards overthrown by wider views and more perfect knowledge of the physical world.

His work, though showing a wide knowledge of astronomical details, is yet quite free from technicalities, and therefore well suited to the general reader and to young persons, who are often deterred from the study of astronomy by the dry array of figures, fearful and incomprehensible,

which beset their path, whereas the question of life in other worlds is one rather to be apprehended by feeling than demonstrated by mathematical calculations. He agrees with Mr. Proctor in the belief that the vital epochs in the universe are not simultaneous, but successive, and manifested only at long intervals. But his faith is greater, and he affirms from spiritual insight, where Mr. Proctor only hazards a conjecture, derived from analogy. He recognises, also, the unity of matter and the universality of law, but he makes no attempt to define the forms or modes of existence of the planet races; he only claims for them conscious intelligence and a moral nature—that they are beings, therefore, who can show forth the glory of God through the intellect, the will, and the affections.

The question is one which has an immense influence upon the human mind, for if we believe in the eternal relation of all intelligences with each other and with God, the notion of annihilation after death becomes untenable and impossible. The universe, then, seems to us like an infinite harp—strike one chord, and all vibrate in unison—and we feel that man was not brought into this wondrous sphere of conscious being merely for this world

and for this one brief life; the whole planet system is his kingdom, and the whole universe is to him a consecrated temple, where, by right of his deathless intellect, he holds an eternal place. All progression is towards perfection, and, in these other worlds, man, gifted with divine strength and clothed upon with a more glorious vesture, may find the antagonism between the higher and lower nature gradually become less and less, until at last the harmony between the will of man and the law of God is perfected, and the ideal heaven of peace and blessedness is reached.

Yet, in spite of this community with the universe, it seems the destiny of the human soul to be eternally alone. A crystal wall insulates and separates each one from his race, and even from his nearest kindred. There are despairful moments in life, when it seems as if we stood alone in the universe. We gravitate towards no centre—have no place in any system—and the primitive force which flung us into being seems ever hurling us onward and downward into an infinite depth of darkness, silence and utter loneliness. No heart reveals itself fully to another; no soul can ever fully utter forth the infinite within it, in human speech. In prayer only do we seem to rise to that

divine extasia when our souls mingle and blend with the one universal soul of the Universe, and, therefore, with truth, one of the Platonists has divinely called prayer φυγη μονου προς μονον —the flight of the Alone to the Alone.

The full emancipation of the spirit, the rending of the bondage which fetters and limits it here within a prison, will be the work of an eternity. It takes millions of years to perfect a world; it may take millions on millions to perfect a human soul; and as here on earth each generation hands on the torch of light to the next, and we walk in the accumulated light of all the ages—so the soul will gather light in its progress from star to star, forever ascending near the throne, but never one with God. Thus the individuality of each conscious being is preserved, and God and the soul remain eternally distinct though eternally united, in the same relation as the planet worlds to the central sun.

In contemplating the solar system in its unity, one is struck with the singularly rhythmic arrangement which connects planet with planet in one harmonious chord. Pythagoras compared the solar system to the chords of a lute, and had we ears to hear, what a magnificent diapason would

reach us from the highest to the lowest note of their grand choral music, as the planets rush through space in orbits of well-adjusted harmonic distances! The relation to the number three is particularly worthy of note; the ancients have noticed this *Triad* in all things. Taking, for example, the inner planets, we find the year of Mercury to be about three months; Venus, six months; the Earth, twelve months; and Mars, twenty-four months.

Then, also, in their respective distances from the sun, the same relation to the number three is observable. In approximate figures, Mercury is distant thirty millions of miles; Venus, sixty; the Earth, ninety; and Mars, one hundred and eighty millions of miles from the sun.

After passing these four smaller planets a great break occurs in the order of the system. In place of one large planet there are numerous fragments, like islands in an æther ocean, either parts of a shattered world, or masses of material which never yet had the power to cohere, being drawn in opposite directions by the opposing influences of Jupiter and the Sun.

On passing from these half-formed worlds we arrive at a new order of planets of immense mag-

nitude and immense length of years, but with days only half the length of ours. The four inner planets have a day of twenty-four hours; the four outer and larger a day of only nine hours or a little more.

The relation to the number three is also manifest in the stupendous masses of the outer planets.

Jupiter, the first and largest, thirteen hundred times greater than the earth, has a year, or period of rotation round the sun, of twelve of our years; Saturn, next in order, of thirty years; Uranus, of ninety years; and Neptune, the last and outermost, of one hundred and sixty years. It is distant from the sun three thousand millions of miles, and the pale satellite that has been discovered attending its path has a solar distance of three times three thousand millions of miles. So that from the first planet, with its year of three months, and solar distance of thirty millions of miles, to the last revolving in the outer darkness, the relation to the number three still holds its remarkable place.

There may be some mystic symbolism in these numbers, for all Nature is full of symbolisms, if we could only find the key. And in these immense orbs and orbits there is no vagueness, no element of

chance; all is ordained with the precision of a mathematical intelligence and designer.

With regard to the duration of life in the other planets, one cannot avoid hazarding some curious speculations. If the inhabitants, like man, are given about three-score revolutions round the sun as the period of an ordinary life, then, in Jupiter, the natural life would be seven hundred years; in Saturn, a thousand years; in Uranus, five thousand years; and in Neptune life would reach to the enormous extent of ten thousand years.

It is, indeed, impossible to believe that in those outer planets, with their immense orbits, the length of life would only equal ours; for, if so, those born in spring, in Neptune, for instance, would never gather the autumn fruits, and those born in winter would never see the summer flowers.

Yet, we have every reason to think that as there exists in these worlds a succession of seasons, and of day and night, so there must be seed time and harvest; the necessity of sustenance, of toil to produce it, and of rest when the work is done. In fact, that the lives of rational beings throughout all the worlds must be of the nature of the human, and, therefore, the duration of life must be in pro-

portion to the sequence of the seasons. And from this enormous length of life they probably attain to a height of power and knowledge impossible to man in the brief span of three-score years. For the human intellect is limited in its operations chiefly because of the frail and rapidly decaying mechanism with which it is united, and through which alone it can manifest itself.

What wonders might be achieved in Art and Science if only man were given a more powerful organisation, and a few centuries more of life!

In the larger planets the material frames are, no doubt, proportionate to the vast length of life in strength and vitality, and are thus enabled to resist the disintegrating action of forces which destroy human organisations in the poor limit of seventy years—a period which does not even equal six months of life in the planet Neptune.

But in the minor planets, where the annual revolution is so brief, the conditions of life must be singularly different. The year of Mercury is but a summer's day, and that of Venus little more. Yet there also we find the regularly recurring seasons and the alternating day and night, as if toil and rest were as necessary as upon earth. But in those fiery regions can there be toil? or do

souls pass swiftly through them as through a purifying fire, before entering the temple of the sun, there to rest for evermore, after their long wanderings of expiation through the series of the outer worlds? Perfect happiness may, indeed, never be experienced in any grade of being; there will still be pain—not the pain resulting from weak organisations, such as ours, but the pain of unfulfilled aspirations, of unsatisfied desires—the finite still seeking to grasp the infinite, and finding still an infinite beyond. In such pain, however, there is no misery; rather, as Schopenhauer has remarked, the intensest consciousness of life. Without it life would be mere passivity—a dull negation, where the upward striving of the soul would be annihilated.

But the *Weltschmerz*—that nameless, bitter despair which haunts humanity—may have no place in a life that finds power always ready to equal aspiration. The triumphs of intellect will be more splendid, and the soul devoted to the culture of the beautiful will then be able to manifest the ideal in more perfect symbols.

The recognition of truth, and the power to give it form in word or act, will always be the chief joy of exalted natures, even as it is here on earth to

those who value the spiritual above the sensual life. But here we only see as in a glass darkly; those who attain the higher life will read the mysteries of the universe by a purer light. Yet ascension may not be the immediate destiny of all. Those who voluntarily debase their nature to the level of the animal may be further debased for a time, and degraded to an existence fitted for lower brute natures, until, after the lapse of ages, elevation becomes possible, through the expiation of sorrow; while those who have led the divine life on earth—the life after the spirit, and not after the flesh—will rise at once to diviner heights of being in higher and nobler worlds.

The ancient philosophers, from Pythagoras to Plato, and from Plato to Plotinus, have uttered many beautiful and striking thoughts concerning the state of the soul after death. Especially are the Neo-Platonists full of divine utterances, though they, indeed, may have caught the inspiration from St. Paul, with whose opinions, particularly as expressed in that marvellous masterpiece of eloquence, the 15th of 1st Corinthians, their writings on a similar subject have a remarkable affinity: as St. Paul himself, a man of learning and genius, was not uninfluenced by the writings

of Plato and Aristotle, with whose works he must have been perfectly familiar, having been brought up, as he expresses it, at the feet of Gamaliel, the most learned Jew of the period, and remarkable for his love of the Greek writers and his endeavours to introduce the knowledge of Greek literature and philosophy amongst the Jewish youth.

It is singular that, with all the mechanical aids now given to science, the moderns, so far as the knowledge of a future life is concerned, have not passed the level reached by the sublime guesses of the ancients. The philosophers of above two thousand years ago recognised and affirmed progressive mutation under immutable laws; the incessant destruction and renovation of all things; the dual nature of man, half animal, half god; the opposing forces of attraction and repulsion, of love and hate, as the principle of motion in all things; the necessity of the knowledge of evil, through which alone the soul learns to know its strength; the origin of all things from fire, which is the theory of Mr. Proctor, as well as of Empedocles, and the purification of the soul through infinite progression and ascension, as taught by Plato.

Plato asserts that our souls, "when they are perfectly established with the Soul of the World, will be likewise perfect, reign on high, and govern the universe itself." And souls of this exalted nature will be shrined in a glorified form, subject neither to infirmity nor defect. And Plotinus maintains that "souls are eternally changing forms; and as often as a soul is able to rise beyond the bounds of earthly generation, it lives divinely with the universal soul."

The theory of the existence of another life necessarily means a higher life—for we judge by analogy—all things here rise to a higher life through death, by which they attain to a nobler incarnation.

The sublime views of Plato on the descent of the soul into the body, as into a prison house, or sepulchre, having first drank of the waters of oblivion before entering the earthly life, and its subsequent resurrection and purification through death, find credence in many thoughtful minds, though visible, tangible proof may be wanting of the truth of the theory. We moderns come, perhaps, too arrogantly and proudly into the temple of knowledge. We stand when we should kneel; and irony and self-sufficing dogmatism discard

with a sarcasm all belief in mysteries which cannot be verified by experience and observation. The final word of the modern philosophy is, that we know nothing of life beyond the grave, because nothing can be known. But the soul refuses to accept this final word, and still searches the infinite for some symbol, or analogy, or law that can give the hope of a future life redeemed from the narrow limitations of the present, and confirm the prescience of an existence transfigured to glory by unclouded intellect, a finer organism, and the highest aims of a purified moral nature.

With this hope we can better sustain the mysterious dispensation of sorrow that shrouds this earthly life, and the coming of that awful moment of gloom when death lays on us his icy hand to draw us down to the grave—

> Nor think it misery to be a man;
> Who thinks it is will never be a god.

If it be impossible to prove the unknown and the unknowable, it is equally impossible to eradicate the universal intuition of humanity that the soul will one day be emancipated from the prison house, and arise from the sepulchre. Faber, the great religious poet of the century, has expressed

this yearning of the soul towards freedom in verse as beautiful as Plato's words:

> We have imprisoned, by our sin,
> Man's dread intelligences,
> And broken lights are flooded in
> Upon them by the senses.
> She sitteth there, a captive maiden,
> Upon the cold bars leaning,
> Until her bosom is dread-laden
> With all Life's lustrous meaning.

Of all the Arts by which the Invisible, the Ideal and the Eternal are manifested, perhaps music excels all others in its power to reveal to us the existence of this dimly discovered higher life of the future; and there are moments when, lifted to ecstasy by the inspiration of music, we feel the deep affinity of the human with the divine intelligence, and a belief in the invisible comes over the mind with the strength of the proto-martyr's faith when, looking upward with death-shadowed eyes, he saw Heaven opened, and Christ, the head and type of a glorified humanity, standing at the right hand of God.

The followers of Pythagoras made a beautiful use of music as an influence to act upon the spiritual nature. Before retiring to rest they purified the reason by certain odes and peculiar songs

which quieted the perturbations of the day; and sometimes even by musical sounds alone they healed the passions of the soul as if by enchantment.

And it was their idea that the soul, before she gave herself up to the body, was the auditor of divine harmony, and that now some melodies heard on earth have the power to wake within her the memory of that music, and she is lifted by it into a divine sympathy with the divine.

The greatest names in the world's intellectual history have upheld the theory that our earth is not the sole point in the infinite cosmic scheme where conscious intelligence exists. Indeed, so instinctive is the belief in life in other worlds, that the doctrine is acccpted by most minds passively, and without examining the grounds upon which belief may be based. Mr. Proctor, though he does not write to prove that there are other inhabited worlds, yet is led up to the conviction by his own deductions from physical phenomena. His views, however, though eminent for the brilliancy and power with which they are set forth, and made comprehensible to all, even the most unscientific minds, differ in no way from those expressed by Kant a century ago in his work, entitled *A General*

History and Theory of the Heavens. Both he and Mr. Proctor hold the belief in the succession of vital epochs; in the luminosity of Jupiter as a life-giving sun; and the incessant formation and destruction of worlds by absorption into their primaries, from whence they are again cast forth by the action of heat, to commence anew their existence as revolving systems round a central sun.

The views of the great German philosopher concerning the inhabitants of the planets are worthy of note. He affirms his belief that the perfection of spiritual and material life in the planet worlds increases in direct proportion to their distance from the sun. Thus Mercury and Venus are placed in the lowest degree of existence; the earth holds an average place—imperfect still, but showing signs of progression—while the highest development is found in the outer regions of the solar system. And he assigns as a reason that the density of the larger planets is much less, and the materials of which they are formed are much less coarse and ponderous than those of the inner planets, which we are accustomed to consider as the bright and beautiful regions of eternal summer.

In studying these theories of the Infinite Cosmos

an involuntary shudder of awe, almost of terror, comes over the mind at the thought that we, frail, weak, much-suffering mortals, evolved from matter by the eternal forces, why or how we know not, without our volition, without the power to fall out of the ranks into the rest of annihilation, are destined forever and forever to endless mutations of form in an endless succession of lives, still, perhaps, of toil and labour and sorrow, under an eternal and changeless system of inflexible law. Turn where we will, the despotism of law confronts us. There is no escape from this awful all-compelling power. Sentient or non-sentient, the monads of the universe must exist throughout all eternity, and fulfil the work destined for them by the unseen Omnipotent Intelligence, who reveals Himself only through laws. And each day, as science extends her conquests over ignorance, more and more of the phenomena of life and the universe are placed under law.

We now know that all evil, all crime and vice, with their consequences of social and moral ruin, all disasters and catastrophes by which thousands perish, and all the ills that flesh is heir to, result from the violation or disregard of some law, physical or moral. Yet, granting this, we stand

before the thick darkness of another mystery. Happiness, as might naturally be expected, does not in this world follow obedience to law—at least, as far as regards the outer life. "The wicked flourish like a green bay tree; the righteous perish and no man layeth it to heart." The recompense and the punishment, then, must be *within*. There is, probably, no suffering like remorse; no peace like that of a good conscience, void of offence before God and men. The compensation will come, perhaps, in those higher states of being in which we all must believe. Suffering in our mortal life would be unjust unless it were meant for purification, because it would be useless. The idea that lies at the basis of all things in the universe is ultimate good, and man must work out this idea in the world which he has been given to rule, through obedience to laws written on his heart, revealed in nature, and manifested through the history of all human lives.

Perfect obedience to the divine idea may never be attained. God alone *is;* man is eternally *becoming*. But through the endless succession of ages and of existences, each diviner than the preceding, the soul will go on unto perfection, until

the physical and moral nature attain to their full beauty and harmony, and men shall be as gods.

Mr. Proctor deserves the thanks of the age for having given a fresh stimulus to this most important subject by his learned and lucid works. The bold and brilliant audacity with which he unveils the mysteries of the infinite, his clear and eloquent, yet simple style, his vast generalisations and fearless assumptions from the known to the unknown, combine to make his astronomical essays the most exciting and profoundly interesting of all the speculative studies recently given to literature. His facts and deductions are alike dazzling, from the wide amplitude and universal range of his knowledge over all that exists; and though he reasons entirely from physical phenomena, as they have been, are now and will be in the eternal duration and eternal change of all things, yet he, as well as Mr. Hamilton, whose arguments presuppose a religious belief, can recognise the signature of the Omnipotent God written upon the mighty dome of Heaven in hieroglyphics whose glorious symbols are worlds and suns and systems revolving throughout eternity.

VENUS VICTRIX.

Woman lies at the base of all life, whether for good or evil. From Eden to Olympus, woman is the first word written on the page of every history and of every religion, and is the illuminated initial of every man's life. The true *Venus Victrix* of creation, her influence is infinite and illimitable, and the world has bowed, and will forever bow, before the sceptre of womanhood. Through her beauty she reigns a queen, and through her sympathy she is the mediating priestess of human destiny; and her power over man, whether through beauty or love, through purity or sin, is the crown or the torture, the glory or the perdition, of almost every human career.

"Beware of women!" exclaims a brilliant French writer; "if they do not crown you, they will strangle you." Yet reason can do little against the force of beauty; the first impulse, the irresistible instinct of a man's nature is the homage to physical beauty. It has a mystic power that

sweeps down all before it, the strongest and wisest. A French writer says, with the eloquent extravagance of his nation and idiom: "What can equal a woman's beauty? Nature made the planets and the stars—well enough in their way—and the flowers and the waving trees, and the red sunsets crimsoning the ocean—very praiseworthy effects all of them, and evidences of a soul endowed with fine sensibilities; but to have invented woman, with the rose-tinted white of her complexion, her hair, her lips, her eyes, her hand, the marble roundness of her arm—this was beyond the power of Nature, with all her skies and sunsets and suns and stars. To create woman required the genius of a God."

Beauty reigns without effort, charms without trouble, fascinates without art. She simply lifts her veil, and male humanity falls at her feet. This is an unfair advantage, certainly, over the rest of the sex; but it is inevitable—a fixed decree of Nature. Not with all the resources of wealth and intellect, of art and science, can less-favoured woman ever hope to achieve the triumphs which beauty obtains by a single glance.

Yet Nature gives compensation and has her revenges. Beauty may have her priesthood of

poets and artists; still there are other gifts and graces by which woman can reign over hearts, and often with a more lasting power than even beauty can command.

A beautiful woman is too often vain and selfish. She seldom loves; yet she is charming in her momentary fancies that seem like passion, but are only caprices. She is a cruel goddess, and demands victims, for her heart is stone. She worships nothing except her own loveliness. A man will die for such a woman; but she remains calm, and drinks the spirit of his life without remorse. The whole world seems all too little for her insatiable greed of conquest and adulation. She is the sorceress, the Lamia, that fascinates and kills. She is terrible and must be propitiated, as the Egyptians hung gorgeous bracelets on the captive crocodile. Insolent when loved, implacable if slighted, her influence wraps a man round like a poisoned garment, and the fire of it consumes his life and soul.

Then it sometimes happens that, wearied and exhausted with vain idol worship, man feels the need of a redemptive force, and it is a woman's hand that draws him up to the light. It is a woman that keeps watch by the sepulchre for the

uprising of a slain and buried soul; and thus she triumphs, also a *Venus Victrix,* through the sublime and holy power of sympathy, which is a glorified form of love. She pours out the wine of life for the one beloved, and asks nothing in return from earth or heaven, only the divine joy of sacrifice, the ecstatic sense of self-annihilation for true love's sake.

This homage rendered to another—this life lavished without dream or hope of recompense—this worship given freely and disinterestedly as to a god—is the true essence of womanhood.

A strange fascination lies in this passionate sympathy; and the power which through its subtle influence a noble-hearted woman can exercise over a man's life is not by any means dependent on youth or beauty, or fashion, or dress, or even brilliant gifts. It has a moral grace higher than all these things—a diviner beauty, which is of the soul. The women gifted with this mystic charm are unfettered by chronology. They are ever young, with the eternal youth of the spiritual nature. To sensitive and clever men they are peculiarly attractive, for they seem to give them a second soul, a fuller life. They alone can intensify the aspirations of a man of genius, sustain his noblest in-

stincts, and appreciate and comprehend his diviner nature, with that perfect knowledge which in a woman always travels along the line of sympathy with swift electric vitality.

As Benjamin Constant said of Madame de Staël when under the influence of her marvellous powers of intellectual fascination: "Such a woman shuts out the universe for you."

It is impossible almost to formulate in words the full mystery of this highest love, which, in its grandest manifestation, only genius gives, and only genius can worthily appreciate. But even less gifted natures gain from it a glory that illuminates all life. It has no element of the morbid selfish passion that first fevers and then painfully wearies. The holy and beautiful love of sympathy "thinketh no evil." It is the sunshine under whose influence all the finest impulses flourish and expand. As the Persian poet has said: "It is like the purple in the garment of a king, splendid in itself, and splendid in the light it radiates."

Women capable of this exalted feeling would rather love than be loved, for love in its highest meaning is aspiration, the instinct of ascension towards the Divine. To love, therefore, is the

highest joy of the noblest soul, and lifts the woman to the angel nature.

Still, all women, when they first open their eyes on life, have the dream of being loved; and to all, perhaps, is given one moment of supreme joy—one hour to believe that love is eternal, but a whole life to find out that it is an illusion. Yet, standing on the ruin of her own dreams, as on a pedestal, woman rises to the height of a diviner life, and can still reign a *Venus Victrix* through the holy beauty of sympathy and sacrifice.

It is remarkable that throughout all epochs of history we find this feminine instinct to aid the work of man, and intensify the spirit and tendency of the age which he leads and dominates, symbolised by the woman in her dress.

Greek life was a glad ritual to heroes and gods, and the Greek women, in their free, beautiful chiton, chlamys and himation, seemed like a procession of priestesses to a temple, or like the band at a choric festival, wreathed and garlanded, moving to the Doric or the Lydian measure, to celebrate the triumphs and victories of kings and heroes.

Then came the Church, which denounced human nature as vile and sinful, and at once the lovely

form of woman was hidden under the shrouding garments of sanctity. The long, lovely hair was sacrificed, and in time the cord and the cross, emblems of pain and suffering and humiliation, replaced the glittering ornaments of youth and the radiant raiment of the vain world's fashion. The anchorite spirit of the Church, which drove men into the lonely rock-caves of the desert, and taught the sublimity of renunciation, impelled beautiful women also to desire death rather than life. They went to martyrdom as to a bridal, and dreamed of no other lover save the mystic Bridegroom of the Soul.

Thus it has been ever with women, they adopt these feminine hieroglyphs of dress to show their union with the ideal of a man's life, even when they are debarred from sharing the action.

In the fierce middle ages, when society was a camp and a battle-ground—when warrior knights, iron-souled and iron-handed, fought and died at the tournament for a lady's smile—then women also became warriors in their dress, and the stiff brocaded corslet and robe of the proud chatelaine simulated in its rigid outline the steel-linked cuirass of her haughty lord.

But the fierce feudal ages passed away in the

ceaseless mutation of all things, and gave place to the dissolute splendours of the monarchies of Europe, when luxury and pomp, tyranny and cruelty, the mirth and madness of sin, reigned supreme in the brilliant poisoned atmosphere of courts, and women "fairer than heaven, more terrible than hell," sat by their crowned lovers, and drained the wine of pleasure from jewelled cups, with their foot on the neck of the prostrate people. It was an age of vain voluptuous pleasure and affected mannerism, and the dress was the expression of the life, gorgeous and haughty, vain, luxurious and artificial. The influence of women tended to evil alone, and the retribution was dreadful in its vengeance.

An hour came when the people, indignant at their degradation, threw off the bondage of kings, princes, nobles and courtesans, and a torrent of blood swept over the splendour and sins of the false and fatal eighteenth century.

On its ruins arose the serene majesty of the Republic, and the women of that era at once strove to preach the new doctrines of liberty by the symbolism of dress. A return to the antique simplicity of manner and true dignity of life was illustrated by classic drapery, sandalled feet and

hair bound with a golden frontlet, as in the days of Socrates and Plato.

The Second Empire, under the sway of a lovely woman, restored for a time the traditions of courtly magnificence; but a new machinery of civilisation had already begun to work, which, impelled by the advance of science, is gradually changing the whole routine of society, levelling and destroying all the old barriers of caste and form and usage, with all "the pleasant old conventions of our false humanity." How, indeed, could the grand and stately dignity of queenly symbolism be any longer possible in a world where the breathless, ceaseless, restless work of life is carried on even by women?

The march of civilisation has therefore necessitated the toilette of progression, and the queens of society now demand not only political and educational equality with man, but also identity with the free and formless fashion of male costume.

The model woman of the nineteenth century inclines towards a divided skirt, a Newmarket coat, a jockey cap; she carries a cigarette in her mouth, a whip at the end of her parasol, a stiletto in her fan, and in her hand is the roll of resolu-

tions she is to enforce at the next public meeting upon a crowd of men.

She no longer glides—the emphasis of decision is in her very footfall, and the feverish energy of action in the swing of her arms or the plunge of her hands into the depths of her coat-tail pockets.

She tramples on the old social traditions of artificial life, and, free and fearless, upholds health and nature above all things.

Horace Walpole maintained that it was fatal to one's reputation to appear at breakfast, and that no one should be fascinating before five o'clock; but the modern woman has organised an "early-rising society." Byron declared that no woman should be seen to eat; but she disclaims this weak pretence of fragile health, and, proud of her youth and strength, the new type of woman (according to Mr. Mallock) eats like a sacred chicken—and we know the sacred chickens were vigorous and voracious.

Life used to be a temple where woman was priestess, or a court where woman was queen, borne along in her gorgeous litter on the shoulders of slaves. Now life is a school board, where woman takes the chair, and adapts herself successfully to her new position and duties.

One mourns over the long hair snipped, the flowing train abridged to a bunch or diminished to a bow—vain and futile endeavour to simulate what once had noble amplitude and royal significance. Yet, after all, the latter-half-nineteenth-century woman is a fine, high-spirited creature, advanced in politics and philosophy, cultured, learned and independent, resolute in will, and fearless in her efforts to break all bondage for herself and others, as a Jael or a Judith, or a Madame Roland, who dies for liberty on the scaffold.

We must, therefore, accept the modern dress, short, hard, concise as a telegram, as best suited to the modern life of energetic work and ceaseless unrest; where there is no place for splendour, no time for variety of costume, and no room by steamer or rail for the luggage of luxury of the travelling millions who circulate round the world in endless vortices.

According to the latest decree, therefore, of the strong-minded, all that is now required by a lady if she takes a Cook's ticket to Jericho and the Pyramids is a costume of black calico and an umbrella.

The age of splendour has passed, and a dreadful uniformity of homeliness and utility pervades all

classes. Everyone seems turned out by machinery, and no one has leisure to study the individual requirements of face and figure—the symphonies of colour, the cadence of lines, the rhythm of accord and contrast, with all the subtle harmonies that make perfect dress like a full chord of music.

Women aim now only at being intelligent and intellectual, and the toilette of work has replaced the charming fascination of luxury and idleness.

So in our modern world we seek in vain for living representatives of the stately formality of Holbein, the regal grace of Sir Peter Lely, the high-bred courtly coquette of Gainsborough's era, or the exquisite elegance of Sir Joshua Reynolds. These types have gone forever. The realism of ulsters and newmarkets, the democracy of dress, is making all our social life colourless and unpicturesque; consequently this age will not, perhaps, add any immortal female portraits to the picture galleries of England.

M. Taine complains of the cold callousness of Englishwomen to beautiful effects in dress. Their clothes, he says, seem fitted as if on a wooden frame, without art, without visible intention; whereas the object should be to enhance beauty

where it exists, or to create it if necessary by the laws of art.

Variety, above all, is attractive; if possible, a woman should never appear twice in the same dress, except, of course, at lectures on primary molecules or the revolution of atoms, or the Unknowable, and subjects of that grave and awful kind; for professors and philosophers and learned men generally never know what a woman wears. But poets and artists, and others of sensitive human organisation, require the charm of varying light and colour.

Humanity is distinguished from the ape by two things—laughter and dress. Women, therefore, should assert their humanity by triumphs in dress, to prove their advanced position in the scale of beings.

Besides, dress charms at all ages. The beauty of form and feature passes away; the coquette dies with youth; even accomplishments weary; but style lasts for life, and never fails to please. It confers a patent of nobility on a woman, and gives her a distinguished and eminent status in social circles.

Yet woman seems growing careless as to this great source of female power, with all its mystic

and subtle fascinations, and the stage is now the only exponent of beauty of design in form and colour.

Lady Martin—Helen Faucit—was the first to raise theatrical costume to the dignity of artistic expression by the perfect grace in fall and flow of lines and draperies; not by the endeavour to pile up fabrics remarkable only for reckless cost, but by producing pictures in form and colour such as painters and sculptors love to contemplate.

Helen Faucit, however, had the brow of a Greek muse, and a form lithe and undulating as the graceful figures on a Greek vase; and thus was able to realise effectively her own ideal of classic grace and beauty.

Recently, also, some admirable and picturesque effects in theatrical costume were produced from designs by Mr. Godwin, the architect, and Lewis Wingfield, artist and novelist, which harmonised admirably with the delicate, ethereal, wayward grace of Madame Modjeska, and the superb dramatic beauty of Genevieve Ward, while the charming Grace Hawthorne always perfectly illustrates the dramatic idea by the artistic accuracy of her beautiful costumes.

At the Lyceum, under Mr. Irving's management,

one is always certain of a series of perfect pictures, the result of deep artistic study and profound knowledge of pictorial and scenic effect. And in Mr. Gilbert's bright operetta of "Patience," the piece, though meant to satirise the cultus of beauty, actually gained proselytes to the æsthetic movement, so infinitely charming were the "love-sick maidens" in their Greek dresses of flowing lines and beautiful combination of colour, while the modern style which they afterwards assume is quite repellent to the nerves from its rude and crude angularity and rigid outline.

Without this pictorial teaching, now brought to such perfection on the stage, one might almost forget the power of tones and form and colour to enhance female beauty; for an ordinary crowd in the daily life of this great Babylon of London seems but a heavy mass of opaque obscurity thrown upon the background of a sunless sky, blackness above, around and beneath. Can we wonder, then, if depression or ill-temper is the result? for nothing generates a morbid discontent like sombre, monotonous, ineffective costume, without any illuminating point of colour to break the uniformity of that national gloom of dress which in England

is considered for a woman the *vrai cachet du comme il faut.*

Uniformity of style is also equally depressing, when all women look as if they were cut after the same paper pattern, and all interesting attractive distinctions of individuality are destroyed.

A woman, on the contrary, should first study her own personality, and consider well what she means to be, desires to be, and can be—either a superb Juno, or a seductive Aphrodite, or a Hebe, blooming and coquette, or a Pallas Athene, grand, majestic and awe-inspiring. And, when the style is discovered that best suits her—it may be for homage or for love—let her keep to it as the symbol of her higher self, unchanged by the frivolous mutations of fashion. For dress thus attains a moral significance, and becomes the exoteric expression of the esoteric spiritual nature.

Now, for the first time in the history of the world, a path is opening to female intellect, energy and talent, and, henceforth, women, perhaps, may lead in the learned professions, take their part in home government, form ministries to organise the code of female rights, and claim the highest university honours, in rivalry with men. Will they be happier? Will it be lost in the coming time,

the grace of indolent luxury, the supreme fascination of beauty, when the career of severe study and training begins in earnest, if women are to compete successfully with men in the great chariot-race of progress in the arena of life? Who can say? A wider sphere of action and higher aims certainly will make their life nobler, and therefore, perhaps, happier.

Woman may gain even truer claims to admiration through the life of work which gives her dignity and honour, than she has yet attained by all her petty accomplishments, the feeble efforts of a prisoned intellect.

The race of the gifted—the artists and poets and thinkers—have rarely a definite law of life: they are simply masses of emotional force, alternations of violent impulses and silent despair. Their genius is a lava stream, that often devastates the life, though it may turn the rudest stones to gems, as it rushes onward. It is a woman's mission to guide, control, direct and calm these storms of passionate emotion, and she will better comprehend the mystic and wayward nature of the intellectual temperament through her own experience of its trials and claims.

Manners even may become nobler because not so

artificial, and the earnestness of thought and feeling will replace the mere coquetry of vanity and display. It is only shallow natures, according to D'Israeli, that mistake noise for gaiety and *persiflage* for wit. Dress also will be more beautiful because simpler and freer from the tortuous elaborations for which earnestness and intellect have no time or inclination.

The woman of the future will never again be the mere idol of a vain worship, the petted toy of a passing hour. She takes her place now in the world on higher grounds than physical beauty, and will gain nobler triumphs; for it is impossible to believe that woman will be less attractive because educated, less tender and devoted because learned, less loving because she can attain the high station, honour, dignity and wealth, which hitherto only marriage could confer, by her own unfettered intellect and genius.

But, through all modes and moods of changing life, the woman's heart will still reign paramount over the woman's brain. In the ceaseless strife against ignorance and sin and fate, woman will ever be on the side of mercy, helping the weak, the wronged, the suffering, and giving light to darkened lives—the true angel of humanity; while the

power she gains from intellect and knowledge will but give her a stronger redemptive force, a sublimer zeal in the cause of right and truth.

All that is noblest and most beautiful in a woman's nature is eternal. No time changes, no trials weaken, no ingratitude even chills, the warm impulse of a woman's heart. Priestess and paraclete she will ever be, as she has ever been; and now, as a queen also, in the new and wider sphere of intellectual power and social dignity, she will stand beside man, his equal and co-worker, giving her aid to the great cause of light and freedom, with all that uplifts human souls from ignorance and degradation; but claiming still her proud title of *Venus Victrix* through the divine grace and sacred mystery of sympathy, that holiest sacrament of life, which binds the destiny of woman to man.

Thus, a nobler humanity will be the revelation of the coming age, brought to a more splendid perfectness by woman's influence in that divine life of love and work and intellect, which finds men human, but which leaves them gods.

SPIRITUAL AFFINITY.

William Von Humboldt, brother of the great Alexander, and eminent himself as a profound and scientific philologist, seems to have been one of the few men to whom it was given to realise the charm of a true, tender and spiritual affection existing between man and woman, quite apart from all physical attraction, if only their souls were eternally related. His thoughts on the subject, expressed with all the lofty serenity of the philosophic temperament, may be studied with interest in his volume entitled *Letters to a Lady.*

Humboldt and the lady to whom they are addressed met only for a few days' intercourse, when both were young. Many years passed, and they held no communication, yet a mutual and ineffaceable impression had been made, and a spiritual relationship was established, entirely unlit by any glow of human sensuous love.

Then a correspondence began that lasted over ten years, during which time they seem never to have met.

Humboldt's letters during this time betray much of the calmness of spirit which is the highest ideal of pagan philosophy. To him this calmness, perhaps, was natural, for he describes himself as all his life singularly free from the fever of the passions. Many of his aphorisms might pass for extracts from the manual of Epictetus, they are so similar in spirit. He seems almost insensible to pain, error, and all the changes and chances of this mortal life, yet he has no harsh or uncongenial nature, no "Manfred misanthropy," having "no sympathies with breathing flesh," for he says in one letter: "One can never hear or see enough of one's own species: every new aspect in which we behold it is fruitful of ideas. In every man, however insignificant, there is hidden a noble and thoughtful nature, which is the more noble as he is the more virtuous." But here is Epictetus and his serene philosophy: "My endeavours have ever been directed to two objects—one, to attain a perfect knowledge of every phase of life; the other, to be dependent on no one, not even on Fortune herself, but to stand firmly on my own vantage ground, and to rely on my own resources. I am happy beyond other men, because few men have so few wants. The satisfying of a want is but the

stilling of a pain, and is opposed to all pure, reposeful enjoyment." Again: "I never fear misfortune, even when it stands upon my threshold; I look on it as an uncheerful, but by no means as an evil companion." Not can outward affairs disturb the serenity of his mind; he lives in the essentials, not dependent on the incidents of life. "To exchange," he says, "for instance, the most agreeable for the most disagreeable abode, would be to me a matter of perfect indifference. I have no wants, except the chair on which I sit, and the table at which I write. Any room is the same to me, and in mine are no luxuries, no mirrors, no sofa." Speaking of past griefs, he considers the retrospect no evil, "for it ever possesses for me a certain kind of sweetness, and I love it, moreover, for the assistance which it gives me in gaining that independence of fortune so indispensable to a manly character."

Nor can the weather even relax the strings of his soul. "Be it foul or fair," he says, "I receive it with as much indifference as the smiling or terrible scenes in a theatre." Nor can praise strengthen their tension: "Praise is not worth much, and I always receive it as metal which has not been assayed, and which, if I did not use

caution, might probably be a source of injury." Pain is treated as no evil. He cannot even prevail on himself to call illness one, and the philosopher, suffering from a severe cold and toothache, thus speaks: "When sickness approaches me, it ever comes attended with a species of rest and serenity to the soul; not that I am without those qualities in good health, but that in health man is kept in an atmosphere of zeal and energy which falls away in time of sickness." The loss of youth, too, has its charms for him. This fleeting away of our *Lebens goldne zeit,* over which Schiller mourns so exquisitely, sheds no gloom on his spirit. He says:

"I always looked forward to old age with peculiar delight, and now that I am approaching it, I find my expectations surpassed. The greatest gain which springs from it is spiritual freedom—freedom from passion. The disposition is serene and time-softened; the reflection purer, stronger, better sustained; the intellectual horizon clearer, and the soul, occupying itself with every kind of knowledge, and every kind of truth, has no other desire. A contemplative, enquiring life is the highest state of existence in the world, and can

only be enjoyed perfectly in age. Life is a vast immense of waters, through whose contending currents we must guide our trembling bark, and it is most natural to rejoice when a large portion of the journey is accomplished. The things of the world have no longer any interest for me"—he was then fifty-seven—"but pass by me as momentary visions, with which neither my mind nor my spirit has any connection. The circle of my acquaintance narrows every day; my dearest friends are dead; but contemplation is an immeasurable field of knowledge and discovery, which ever offers new charms. I have often passed whole days entirely occupied with my own thoughts. It is an important consideration that men crowded closely together become selfish. We must retreat from the crowd of humanity to the heights of nature; by such means alone can a man leave the world of sense and live in the universe of thought. The fear of death is diminished; we learn to look on it but as a mere transformation, as one of the natural consequences of the design of our being. Old age is, in reality, but as youth, an entrance into life; an exaltation of the thoughts."

Darley, the dramatist, has expressed something of the same idea in one of his plays: "Youth is

sadder than age in its decline, for it is falling to a *lower* state of existence, but age is rising to a higher." Humboldt has the highest appreciation of the silent beauty of a woman's life, and of that light, like still sunshine, which women cast from their own peculiar sphere of influence upon the stormy waters of man's more troubled existence. "I love," he says, "above all things, the laboriousness of women, and the labours to which they attach themselves permit them, peculiarly, to live a life of feeling and ideas. To this I attribute the deep, beautiful, earnest disposition which most women enjoy so beyond that of men who have even received a higher education." Dwelling in greater seclusion, their souls hold more frequent and earnest communion with themselves, and the very solitude to which social laws banish her he thinks of "great value to a woman, elevating her soul, so tender and earnest in itself, purifying and withdrawing it from all those little, mean and distracting pursuits into which women fall so much more easily than men." There are women, also, who love solitude instinctively and naturally, and are drawn to it by the higher aid it gives to the exalted moods of the soul. But they are exceptional natures, the women of genius, who realise the idea that joy

comes not from outer things, but from the depths of their own inner being. And the love given to such women by a man who can appreciate high qualities is unchangeable, and knows no diminution from the passing years, or the fading tints of youthful beauty.

In every position, Humboldt maintains, woman's life is insulated, therefore more spiritual than that of man, and to draw her into the fierce arena and battle-ground of life would blight and ruin all that is most beautiful and elevated in her nature. For woman is not made for combat or self-assertion, but for sympathy and self-sacrifice, and she can only reach to the higher plane by the annihilation of self. Thus, the inner spiritual life is developed more truthfully and purely in woman than in man, for men grow hard and selfish and crabbed by the dull routine necessity of work laid on them, where the toil is not lightened by love. While toil, no matter how arduous, is borne cheerfully by a wife or mother for the sake of those she loves, and often without any recompense.

Speaking of his own age to his fair, but no longer youthful, friend, he says: "This reminds me that I do not know your exact age, and I consider it of great importance to know the ages of

my friends, especially of such as are females. I have my own thoughts on women's ages, and prefer those somewhat advanced in years to those who are younger." He, at least, did not hold to the dogma that—

> "There flows through all the dells of Time
> No stream like youth again."

for in his opinion "women's personal charms continue to unfold to a much later period than is generally supposed, and that their minds are much improved by years is manifest. I have never cared," he says, "to form a friendship with a woman much younger than myself, and certainly would not have married one. Similarity in all conditions of the soul is necessary for exalted intercourse, and a man can only find great joy in marriage when his wife agrees, according to the different nature of her intellect," with all the thought and feeling of his soul. His notions on friendship are peculiarly just and true. It must be free, trusting and spontaneous, *demanding nothing, needing nothing,* for that would be but an interchange of compassion, which is "a distressful feeling," or of sympathy, which is very beautiful, but only so to a certain extent.

The condition of a perfect friendship is, that each should be sufficient of himself for himself. A joyous, sunny, blissful feeling of spontaneous admiration, each walking in his own light, yet rejoicing in the glory of the mingled radiance. Nor is friendship to come too near, with its microscope examining the small motives that, mayhap, may guide our greatest actions, nor with its smoked glass discovering the spots that may sometimes dim their lustre. A sacred reserve is as necessary to friendship as to love. "Even to my wife," he says, "I do not impart my joys and sorrows, nor the accidents of life that jostle me about; there are nobler subjects of discourse. Friendship and love demand the most entire confidence, and with *inquisitive souls* there is no confidence." How true is that! Friendship (particularly between two beings of opposite sexes) he calls "a wonderful relation." "They share in common that Inner Life of the soul, wherein each yields up their own peculiar existence to the other, yet preserves it in a state of greater clearness and purity by the contact." *Deux âmes qui se touchent sans se confondre,* as a Frenchman has defined the "wonderful relation." Love has a sensuous element in it, and there is earthliness in all passion—it is com-

mon to all natures, the lowest as the highest; but the feeling of friendship is the peculiar prerogative of only the highest, tenderest and most gifted souls. Speaking of spring, he says, and many minds will echo the thought: "Your sorrowful emotions at this, the period of Nature's resurrection, are common to all who think deeply and carefully, without, by any means, injuring the pleasure with which they greet her after her long sleep. The sadness of these emotions is the result of their earnestness, for all the earnest emotions of humanity are sad. The instability of all life is never so manifest to us as at the change of the seasons; the sight of the joyous life of the world of leaves and flowers, so free from any trace of winter, is as deeply moving as the sight of a child who knows not care, whom care knows not." All poets have found the strings of their harp to sound more mournfully when touched by the spring winds. How beautifully, says the Italian lyrist, comparing the glowing, hopeful life of beauty in the external world around with the desolate winter reigning, perhaps, in the soul that contemplates it:

"O primavera, gioventu de l'anno,
Tu torni ben, tu torni,
Ma teco altro non torni

Che la rimembranza misera, e dolente.
Tu quella se, tu quella,
Ch' eri pur dianzi si vezzosa e bella,
Ma non son io gia quel ch'un tempo fui!"

And the great Spaniard Cervantes not less pathetically exclaims: "La primavera sigue al verano, el verano al estio, sola la vida humana corre al su fin, sin esperar renovarse sino es en la otra vida."

Yet, saddest of all, is that tearful line where Schiller says of the brief spring of his own suffering existence:

"Doch Thränen gab der kurze Lenz mir nur."

So the correspondence between Humboldt and the lady went on for years, and their friendship remained unchilled, for influences that touch the soul are eternal, and spiritual affinity is a deathless passion, unlike the more transient delirium of the senses. It rests ever calmly on the serene heights of the psychical life, and is never touched or tortured by the exactions of jealousy, or the irritation of waning temper; and not even the sad evidences of fading youth and beauty can mar or kill the affection which is based, not upon sensuous and, therefore, evanescent attraction, but on the eternal harmony of related souls.

THE WORLD'S NEW PHASES.

The railroads of the world are fast becoming the truest and most reliable expression of national progress; and the intellectual advance in art, science and civilisation of any country or region of the earth can be estimated at once, and lead off clearly by a survey of these iron *oghams* cut deep on the surface of the globe. Along these grooves the thoughtful mind will be led in a thousand directions; for steam and electricity have transformed the world, and almost annihilated space and time. Europe is joined to America by bands of vapour and a coil of wire, while separate nationalities, once jealous of and hating each other, are becoming merged into one universal brotherhood, who claim the whole earth as their heritage and country; and all peoples and nations on the face of the globe are tending towards the realisation of the grand formula of an ideal future—Fraternity, Liberty and Equality for all the children of men—a powerful, united, enlightened humanity.

Every child born now is heir to a wonderful heritage of light and knowledge. Science is daily discovering new and infinite sources of wealth—special gifts latent in each country, by which a people could become truly prosperous if they only knew how to use them; so that if poverty and degradation and misery exist, it is man's sin and not God's curse that has brought these evils on any land.

Even in the last twenty years what changes have been effected in the relations of nation with nation, and in our knowledge of the vast treasures awaiting human enterprise in every portion of the globe! And what grand portals are opening everywhere for the onward march of humanity! France has made a path at Suez for the ships of the world to pass from the Mediterranean to the Indian Sea; while America throws a railroad across Panama to connect the two great oceans, the Atlantic and the Pacific—thus realising the dream of Columbus of a direct path from Europe to Asia by the *West;* for it is proved now that the shortest route possible from London to China lies along the great highway of the Atlantic, across Panama to the East Pacific.

English enterprise also is developing a new and

unthought-of region of fertility and beauty in the interior of Africa, where even the gentler sex brave all dangers for the sake of knowledge, and a woman's hand has helped to draw back the veil of Isis. Lady Baker, with only the torch of love to guide her across the mighty desolation of an untrodden world, aided to solve the mystery of the Nile; while Mrs. Piazzi Smith, taking up her abode and making her habitation for months in an ancient Egyptian tomb, assisted her husband to take the measurement of the Pyramids. Then America—colossal America—lying within eight days' sail of our Irish shores, sends on the poverty-stricken hordes of overcrowded Europe by its forty thousand miles of railway to regions where land is given them for the asking, and wealth is certain if they work. The human race is as yet but a handful on this magnificent continent, which God seems to have given to Europe just as Europe, effete and exhausted, failed in the resources adequate for the support of her own children. And American energy knows no limits; railroads have been carried five hundred miles west of the Missouri, and across the Rocky Mountains, discovering illimitable wealth of coal and iron as they advance. Two lines of railway are even now

swiftly running across the buffalo hunting-grounds of the Indians, driving Indians and buffalos before them, and leaving these prairies of the West ready for the planting, peaceful hand of the emigrant to turn them into the greatest pasture plains of the world. Thus every iron line is a symbol and a prophecy of progress, and the exponent of the power, life and energy of a people. On looking over the most recent maps we see at once that England has done her work splendidly with her iron forces. She exhibits a dense network of railroads; France the same; and Prussia nearly equals them. These black lines tell of the energy of the three great energising nations of Europe. Happy, prosperous, flourishing little Belgium presents a goodly number of the best organised railways in Europe; and Italy, under the powerful inspiration of her new-found life, is already rivalling her great compeers, and has brought Florence within thirty-six hours of Paris. Spain languidly tries to move on the iron groove, aided by English hands and brains; but the nobler nations of the north, Sweden, Denmark and Norway, have already succeeded, notwithstanding the difficulties of the undertaking, in making several suggestive black lines on the rugged surface of Scandanavia.

Russian policy is represented exactly by her railroads. Russia neither desires the stranger to visit her, nor her own children to leave her. Therefore, she has no branch lines running hither and thither over the immense flat surface of her infinite swamp; but she stretches out one long, menacing arm from St. Petersburg to Moscow, thence across a distance of eight hundred miles, and clutches Warsaw in her iron grasp; and with a branch line to Berlin, and a few offshoots from this one main trunk, Russian enterprise in the matter of railways has an end. But Asia no longer puts her trust alone in elephants for the purpose of locomotion; the steam engine has dethroned these sagacious monsters, and the scream of the railway whistle through forest and jungle startles the tiger in his lair. A railroad runs across India from the coast to Madras, and from Bombay to Calcutta; and from Calcutta to Delhi one can travel a thousand miles by rail without even changing carriages. New Zealand also has her railroads and her telegraphs, and by these the ancient land of the cannibal is fast becoming an advanced, civilised, fashionable place, where wealth is plenty as in London, and society *almost* as brilliant as at Paris.

Australia is already an old established country,

equal, if not superior, to the mother land in all that riches can command and industry achieve. But there are some nations that still persistently refuse the gospel of the Iron Age. China, for instance, denounces railroads; hates them; forbids them; won't have them at any price. She will make no iron grooves for the chariot-wheels of the stranger to run lightly in; and Pekin trembles at the thought of these great highways for the nations to pass over. Turkey is quite behind the age in these matters also. But the Japanese are wiser; and as they have already constructed very admirable steamers without any European aid, so they will soon have railroads everywhere made by their own hands to delight their own cunning little eyes.

Africa, with all its horrors of burning deserts and brutalised humanity, is yet bounded north and south by bands of civilisation; and the French at Algiers and the English at the Cape run their railroads and erect their telegraphs, which will one day, no doubt, meet and clash and flash in the very heart of Africa, by the shores, perhaps, of the great Albert Nyanza itself, with a branch line for tourists to the Victoria Falls, which, it is said, equal Niagara in grandeur. But even more than steamships and iron roads does the electric wire

tend to draw all the nations of the earth into one great unity. The human race, in fact, is becoming like one vast sentient being, surrounded by an invisible but homogeneous nervous system through which thoughts flash simultaneously with the rapidity of lightning, and minds separated by whole continents and oceans can vibrate in unison at the same instant, as if men had acquired divine attributes and become omniscient and omnipresent. We pledge our friends in America at our feasts, and the response comes back to us before the sparkles have died upon the wine-cup. An eclipse takes place in India, and the account of it is read in London before the shadow and the darkness have quite passed from the sun. It is impossible for ignorance and isolation to continue much longer under the all-powerful influence of these new-found forces. Every stroke of the piston is the trumpet-note of progress, and the triumph of intelligence, power and knowledge over the foes that keep men prisoned and fettered in mental and physical degradation.

In glancing over the maps of the world, even a careless eye must be struck with the remarkable advance of geographical knowledge, which has now named almost every point of the earth's surface

from the Poles to the Equator. The great blanks on the face of the globe marked "unknown," so pleasant to our childhood, because thereby we escaped the dire necessity of learning by rote the names of a harrowing list of chief towns, seated upon an aggravating number of rivers, are rapidly filling up. New Zealand has become a second England, mapped out with homely English names that tell the tale of that wonderful and indomitable English enterprise which pervades the whole world, diffusing through every clime and region the arts, industry and language of the great nation which rules over one hundred and fifty millions of the people of the earth. The portals of the ice-world have been unbarred by English enterprise and the daring of heroic men, amongst whom none have shown more splendid courage, or achieved more in Arctic exploration, than our own brave Irishmen. The names of Sir Leopold M'Clintock, of Kellett, Sherrard Osborne and Maguire are foremost amongst those who flashed light on the polar mystery, making visible every cape and bay and headland along the utmost limits of the earth; while another gallant Irishman, Sir Robert M'Clure, solved the problem of the North-West Passage, and sailed his ship triumphantly from the Pacific

round by the north coast till within sight of the waters of the Atlantic; but there, blocked up by ghastly walls of impenetrable ice, he seemed destined to add his name to the fatal list of Arctic discoverers, while day by day for a thousand days he and his crew watched the ice closing round their doomed ship, as in the old Spanish story we read of the prison walls contracting, by some secret mechanism, round the victim within till they crushed him to death. So three years passed, till all hope failed, and they stood face to face with death as only brave men can. They nailed their flag to the mast and resigned themselves to die; but at that last hour relief came like a miracle—a ship was at hand to rescue them. And the most affecting scene ever witnessed perhaps under the polar sky was when the two friends, the two Irishmen, M'Clure and Kellett, one having sailed by the Pacific, and the other by the Atlantic, met and clasped hands on that lonely ice-field, and M'Clure, kneeling down, thanked God for the tidings which saved him and his companions from a horrible death. But his good ship, *The Investigator,* could not be freed from the ice-fetters, and had to be left to fate. She may be in existence yet, with her flag still floating in the silent polar air, though no

human eye may ever rest again on the spot named by Sir Robert M'Clure, in memory of his great deliverance, "The Bay of Mercy." But it has taken its place permanently on the map of the world, and in the heroic but terrible annals of Arctic discovery.

And science ever follows quickly on the track of the explorer, revealing for mankind the utility and value of the new territories gained from waste and desolation, just as the information is most needed for the purposes of commerce and colonisation. If the rumour goes forth that the resources of the Old World are failing—that the coal of England is nearly exhausted, and her stores of copper and tin are being brought low—then science announces that Australia possesses copper enough to supply the whole world, and that the coal-fields of America are inexhaustible.

If the human race is overcrowding this outworn Europe, then science lifts the veil from the centre of Africa, and shows a lofty tableland fit for all the purposes of life—with green pastures, lakes as large as all Scotland, lofty mountains pouring down eternal cataracts to feed that mighty river, the Nile, which traverses 36 degrees of latitude, or the fifth part of the entire distance from

pole to pole—a magnificent new world, containing millions of square miles, given over to the despairing European, who fights through life and death for the possession of one acre of land at home.

If the pasture lands of Europe are proving insufficient for the increasing population, then science drives her rail-car through the boundless prairies of the West, clearing a path through regions where millions might live and feed the whole world besides. London now makes its marketing at New York, and every nation and people will soon be bound together by that strongest bond and pledge of peace and unity, mutual necessity and mutual advantage.

But science, though it has revealed many facts, has not yet solved all mysteries, and the early condition of our globe is still one of these mystic problems. It is supposed that the earth was once an immense unbroken plain, with a climate very different from the present, for it is proved that tropical verdure once reigned at the north, and that the present lands of snow were then fair lands of flowers. Recent explorations of Greenland show that a rich tropical vegetation once existed there; and Sir Robert M'Clure found traces of petrified forests at the extreme end of the polar world,

where not a shrub will live now. This vast elder world was then, it is thought, broken up and dislocated into continents; two oceans separated the earth into two hemispheres; islands were flung off from the mainland; the British Isles were rent from Germany; Ireland was torn from the coast of Spain, where the Bay of Biscay now flows; New Zealand was hurled by volcanic action from that region of volcanoes, the Pacific coast of America, and remains to this day a volcano itself, or rather an aggregate of volcanoes, with fountains of steam and rivers of boiling water; and so all other changes went on—by which mountains rose, and lake and river and sea were formed—till the world settled down quietly into its present condition. But, amidst all these changes, Africa—according to Sir Roderick Murchison—suffered no mutations and shows no sign of submersion or dislocation, or of volcanic action, but remains, in the midst of a new order of things, a fragment of an elder primitive granitic world, the oldest portion of our globe; while America he pronounces to be the latest and newest—a modern alluvial plain—a region of volcanoes and earthquakes, as if scarcely yet settled down into compact solidity.

Europe, the most highly-favoured portion of the

globe, owes all its wealth, power, commerce and salubrity of climate to this dislocating process. Every rift of the ocean, every cleft of the mountain, made a path for knowledge, or revealed a source of wealth; while Africa, which admits the ocean nowhere, has remained till now impervious to all commerce and civilisation, except at the coast.

Science has also penetrated the depths of the ocean, and told us of that immense sub-Atlantic plain—perhaps the submerged surface of an elder world—where for a thousand miles a car might run without meeting an obstacle to its progress. And, lifting its glance to the sun, science has analysed its substance, revealed the metals it contains—above all, the abundance of iron, from which the inference may be drawn that life there is not radically dissimilar from our own—that it also has its needs and requirements, and that intellect akin to the human, though probably far loftier and nobler, has the same material objects to work on to supply them.

But the history, the origin, the duration of that early mystic race of man, whose remains are strewn over the surface of the earth, are problems which not even science has yet solved. Who can tell the

origin of this great, silent race, that has not left one written sign or symbol of human speech, though its footsteps can be traced from the farthest India to the last headland of western Ireland, and from thence across the great plains of America, by that mysterious alphabet of stone which yet none can form into intelligible words to tell us whence they came or whither they went? A mighty race indeed, that has left ineffaceable memorials of its world-wide wanderings. Recent discoveries in the valley of the Mississippi alone show a space of upwards of a hundred miles covered with their grave-mounds, while the soil is rich with quantities of their peculiar stone implements, identical in form and fashion with those found in Ireland, specimens of which are exhibited in such profusion in our Royal Irish Academy.[1] Many hold the belief that this people of the Stone Age was an antediluvian race which perished in the great catastrophe of the Deluge; while others have supposed for them a pre-Adamite origin. This theory of a series of pre-Adamite races, gradually completing the links of the chain between the lower animal and intellec-

[1]For a full description of these implements see the "Catalogue of Antiquities" of the Royal Irish Academy, by Sir William Wilde, Vice-President, R.I.A.

tual man, has received additional confirmation from the recent explorations in Central Africa. There we find a race hideous in all respects, morally and physically—revolting to all human senses —without any notions of a God, of a moral law, of truth or justice, or any rule of life beyond what cunning teaches—without memory, or history, or traditions, the first link apparently between the gorilla and man—differing only from the brute creation by the gift of speech. And so they have remained for at least six thousand years, fragments of an elder race, as Africa itself is of an elder world; shut up from all human intercourse or chances of improvement by bands of desert and a cordon of poison. But for what purpose in God's great providence this horrible destiny was laid on them none can know.

The men of the Stone Age, on the contrary, show a comparatively high organisation; for they have left evidences of ingenuity and design, of a sense of symmetry and fitness, and proofs of the adaptation of means to ends; and also of a noble reverence for the dead, which almost proves their belief in immortality.

But the most mysterious of all existing races is the Chinese; this people that never knew a child-

hood—that ever since human history began has exhibited a knowledge of science and a perfection in art which Europe even now cannot equal; a nation that numbers three hundred and fifty millions of people, whose language is more spoken than any other on the face of the globe, and to whom the tenth part of the earth has been given for a possession. Yet, endowed as they are with the keenest intellect, they are morally but half developed. They have never received, and are never likely to receive, the great Gospel of Christianity; they have never been brought under the law of its blessings, promises or judgments. And so they, too, stand on the earth, a race apart; and have so stood for six thousand years, strangers to that fold within which alone we are taught to believe eternal safety and salvation can be found. Some writers, from the peculiar nature of the Chinese intellect, so matured yet so unprogressive, assume that the Chinese race is the latest of the pre-Adamic races; while others fancy they have discovered in the Chinese the descendants of Cain, to whom, we know from Scripture, the knowledge of the higher arts, such as architecture, metallurgy and music, was first revealed.

For the leaders of humanity, however, we must

look to Europe. Someone has said: "The men of divine instincts are all European"; and in Europe we find two races who are pre-eminently the world-leaders—the Gothic or Teutonic race, of which England is the highest representative; and the Celtic, including the Latin, of which France is now chief and head. These two races—the Teuton, grave, wise and industrious; the Celt, brilliant, powerful and proud—seem destined to rule the world. The English language, the most perfect form of Teutonic speech, is now spoken by above two hundred millions of people; English laws, literature, commerce, arts, manufactures and religion, extend over the whole of America, of Australia, of New Zealand, over half of Africa and half of India, and are permeating every seaport and every remotest island and country on the face of earth or ocean. Then to the Celtic race is given the finest portion of Europe—the Mediterranean shore with all its noble kingdoms, France, Italy, the Spanish Peninsula, Greece and the Ægean Isles; the North of Africa is theirs; their influence directs Egypt, has overleaped the wall of Chinese prejudice and is even felt in Japan; whilst the *union* of the two races has formed what promises to be the mightiest

dominion the world has ever yet seen—the great American Republic. Celt and Teuton have met there in the strength of their united intellect and power, and no other race on earth can now hope to rival or conquer them. They are the great levers of humanity. Other races are stationary or retrogressive; they alone advance. For them the law of life is onward. And the result will be to build up a better and a nobler humanity. Light and knowledge must follow in the path of the explorer—in the track of the iron car, and the missionaries of science will become the missionaries of God. And it is remarkable how rapidly all other tribes and nations that stand in the way of these two great destined races are disappearing from the earth—the half-souled Negro, the Red Indian of the prairies, the miserable Gnomes that guard the portals of the gold lands of the Pacific, as well as the luxurious, sensuous Oriental. The world is completing the cycle of its destiny, and travelling back to that era when all the earth was of one family, one speech, and one religion.

But through all the whirl of the world's changes and phases let us see what has been doing for Ireland. Alas! we have no page to add to the great book of progress—no record of advance, only of

decadence or stagnation. In three decades we lost three millions of our people—that is all we have to tell. Italy in that time has risen to a great, free nation of twenty-four millions; Greece, with a population of only a million and a half, has become a self-governed, independent State; Prussia has taken her place almost at the head of Europe; and Spain has boldly asserted the right of a people to choose their own form of government. We only dream while others act:

> "The sounds we hear of the new Evangels,
> Rising like incense from Earth's green sod,
> But we alone, before worshipping Angels,
> Idly stand in the garden of God."

With a population numbering twice that of Switzerland, nearly four times that of Greece, and equal to all Sweden, Norway and Denmark put together, Ireland is still held in leading-strings by another people; and after fifteen hundred years of Christian civilisation, and seven hundred of British rule, we are still without commerce, without literature, without a flag, without dignity—in a word, without self-government. The centre of Ireland is as unreclaimed as the centre of Africa; with a splendid seaboard, we are still without pas-

senger ships to take us to the Continent, and are obliged to traverse the whole breadth of England to find a vessel to convey us to the adjacent coasts of France and Spain—though ages ago, long before England set her foot here, a constant and direct intercourse was kept up between Spain and Ireland; the magnificent West, which should be the great highway between Europe and America, with ships on the ocean and rail-cars on the land to carry on the traffic of two worlds, is still a silent, solitary waste. Are we not, indeed, the true lotos-eaters, described by Tennyson in a picture he must have meant for Ireland:

> In the afternoon they came unto a land
> In which it seemed always afternoon;
> A land where all things always seemed the same.
> And round about the keel, with faces pale,
> The mild-eyed, melancholy lotos-eaters came;
> And deep asleep they seemed, yet all awake.

Yet, through all fate and misfortunes, Ireland, as part of the great Celtic race, is fulfilling the great destiny of dispersion, and going forth to possess the world.

This little island, scarcely larger than a good-sized American farm, yet which her people allow

other hands to rule, is now but the expression of the centre, not of the circumference of the Irish nation; for the Irish have founded a nation in America and another in Australia already equal in number to the nation at home. *Planetai,* ceaseless wanderers through space, yet ever turning with thoughts of affection round the one common centre—their own old country.

It is remarkable that although the Irish generally begin life abroad at the base of the social pyramid, they rapidly rise to the summit; and while the solemn, industrious Teuton races continue to plod on at the rough hard work of the world, the daring, brilliant, ambitious Celt aspires to lead and rule. Thus the Irish element is found strong in every civilised government except their own.

Our wanderings might lead us on over the maps of the world to an infinite of thought and speculation; yet even from this brief survey the conviction must arise upon every mind that a brighter future is opening for the human race; that light is gaining upon darkness, knowledge achieving her peaceful yet stupendous victories for man, and freedom is everywhere annihilating the system of the old feudal tyrannies, which kept the masses debased and abject in the bonds of ignorance and serfdom.

The Spirit of the Age goes forth conquering and to conquer, with its three mighty forces: *Σοφια, δύναμις, νοῦς*—Wisdom, Power and Mind; revealing, destroying, reconstructing and building up a fairer world and a nobler humanity over the lair of the lion, the trail of the savage, and the wrecks and sediment of the bygone ages.

THE BONDAGE OF WOMAN.

For six thousand years the history of woman has been a mournful record of helpless resignation to social prejudice and legal tyranny—a doom of expiation laid on the sex, perhaps, for having been first in the transgression. Yet, tradition teaches also that through woman comes the redemption of humanity, and many earnest souls are even now waiting for some diviner revelation of the mission of woman than the world has yet seen. "Earth waits for her Queen," is the epigraph of Margaret Fuller's great essay, entitled, "Woman in the Nineteenth Century." As yet, however, the expiatory sacrifice goes on unchanged, and women still weep and toil, as they have ever done, that man, the lord of the world, may find existence made easier and pleasanter by the ceaseless devotion and patient self-sacrifice of the inferior, at least the weaker sex.

In the early ages, while men were warring or hunting, the women of the family performed all

the servile duties; drawing water from the well, like Rebecca; tending the flocks, like Rachel; or cooking the food, like Sara, who was dismissed to knead cakes while angels were conversing with her husband.

Polygamy and slavery began even before Adam's death. "Hear my voice, ye wives of Lamech," exclaimed the dictatorial Antediluvian to his two wives, Adah and Zillah, who, no doubt, obeyed in silence, for their answers are not recorded in the sacred history.

Everywhere bondage was the portion of women. In the East they were considered as articles of traffic simply. A man acquired his rights over them just in proportion to his ability to purchase. Thus, Solomon had a thousand wives in his harem.

In Africa women have ever been the hard-worked drudges of their barbarian masters. The three thousand and thirty-three wives of the King of Dahomey—to which mystic number he is limited —are but so many menials; and other African chiefs have a bodyguard formed of their young wives, to run beside their horses on state occasions.

But even in England, Christian England, the doom of the bond-slave is on the fated sex. For a true knowledge of the condition of women of the

lower classes here the revelations made by the Brothers Mayhew may be studied with profit; even in this splendid, wealthy London, the record is one long, dreadful tragedy of toil and suffering, starvation and sin, under the sway and rule of their brutal masters.

Yet occasionally women have risen by force of genius to stations of power and dignity, and proved themselves equal to the position, like Deborah, judge and prophet in Israel; or Semiramis, who built Babylon in one year; or the learned and beautiful Zenobia, who could be conquered only by an Aurelian; or the Carian Artemisia, whose statue was erected at Lacedæmon.

But though rarely admitted to the royal dignity, the office of the priesthood was often shared by women. For a very general belief existed as to their susceptibility to inspiration, and their peculiar relations with the spiritual world was part of the popular creed. All the great diviners of old were women—the Pythias at Delphi; the Sibyls; the Druidesses; the Valkyria, and others; and this acknowledged mysticism of woman was perhaps the origin of the sacred respect shown to her in the East, though politically she had no position. A woman was required to be the symbol of stainless

purity, and the nuptial rites were all framed as types of this great virtue of chastity, which was considered the basis of all others in the female character.

The bath, whither the bride was conducted in solemn procession, was the emblem of purification. The perfumes and jewels symbolised the inner grace of the spirit; while the rose-coloured bridal veil heightened and represented the blush of modesty; but the Jewish writers say that the veil was worn because of the angels, for it was the beauty of woman's hair that tempted them down to love the daughters of men.

And St. Paul is supposed to allude to this tradition when he says: "A woman should have a covering on her head, *because of the angels.*"

A crown also was worn at the marriage, in sign of the consecration to a higher life; hence the Jews call a bride "the crowned." And she was lifted over the threshold of her husband's dwelling to signify that she entered it without stain.

In Syria the bride sits with closed eyes the first day of her arrival; and a Bedouin girl remains blindfolded a week, to show that her husband is now a covering to her eyes. Purity is the one supreme virtue demanded of a woman, and if she fail

in this, her husband has the power over her of life or death.

All exercise of intellect is discouraged in the East, except by performers for hire, and no man, even of the lowest class or caste, would marry a public dancer or singer, so degrading is held the exhibition of a woman's person or gifts, except for the one to whom she is consecrated.

The Buddhists, especially, maintain the divine right of the man over the woman; for, according to the Hindu Shaster, the husband may divorce his wife if she scolds or presumes to eat before he has finished his meal; while in China a divorce can be obtained for loquacity, a tendency in women very prevalent amongst the Celestials—for, says the Chinese proverb, "What women have lost in their feet they have gained in their tongues." Submission and industry are the chief virtues required of a Chinese wife. Even the Empress superintends the silk-winding and weaving, and the title of the chief court lady is "The Mother of the Worms." But female children are not allowed to overcrowd the Empire, so that it is customary to send round a cart every morning through the streets of Pekin to pick up dead babies of the baser sex.

Between the Black Sea and the Caspian, where

the Aryan race had its origin, the perfection of human beauty is still to be found. Southward, from that centre, the type degenerates to the Ethiopian, and eastward to the Mongolian variety; while northward the type still further degenerates to the flat-faced, square-headed, small-eyed Calmuck—a mean and sinister-looking people, yet with intellect enough to hold women in bondage; for the bride must pull off the husband's boots in token of submission, and a whip is given to him, which he scruples not to use.

In some tribes the bride is conveyed to her destined spouse with the touching rubric—"Here, wolf, take thy lamb," and baking utensils are buried with a woman, as bow and arrows with a man, so intensely allied do they consider the female soul and cookery.

The Javanese are a better specimen of the Mongolian race, for they permit women to divorce husbands at will; so that some women may even count up twenty husbands without having discovered one worth retaining. Still the fatal sign of degradation is exacted, for a bride is expected to wash her husband's feet as the first symbol of submission. One heroine, however, stands out in the Javanese annals an honourable example of her sex, for, hav-

ing performed her portion of the ritual, she flung the water in the gentleman's face, and refused to accept him as her lord and master.

In Sumatra the taste in beauty is peculiar, and to please her lover a girl is required to flatten her nose, stretch her ears and blacken her teeth; otherwise she would not be accepted as a wife. If she is unfaithful to her marriage vows, the punishment is to shave off her hair; while the lover, with summary justice, is eaten by the tribe.

In Borneo courage is supposed to win the heart of a woman; for no man takes a wife till he has cut off the head of an enemy. If he wishes a second wife he cuts off another head, and so on; wives and heads always equal.

If we now pass to New Holland, we find a frightful, ash-coloured race, greased, tattooed and scarred; so hideous in appearance that ethnologists fail to trace their affinity to any of the existing human species. Still these hideous and degraded beings have attained, in one point at least, to the philosophy of civilisation, and fully uphold the supremacy of man over the woman. The marriage rites are simple, yet even more than symbolic, for the bride's front teeth are knocked out as a preliminary; then the husband flings a kangaroo skin

over her shoulders and drives her before him to his hut with blows and hideous cries.

Ancient Egypt, however, combined, in a singular degree, the sensuous and the intellectual in the national treatment of women, for history records the names of women who reigned and ruled there by learning and spiritual influence even more than by beauty. The principal deity was a woman, and the chief priestess of the Mysteries of Isis ranked next to the throne. Still the worship of women was exceeded in sacred intensity by that of cats, for whom, if one happened to die, the whole family shaved the head in token of honour. But modern Egyptian women have now sunk into the usual routine of feminine life—love, dress and embroidery, and claim notice only by the excessive beauty of their eyes.

One grows weary of the woeful uniformity of female life and bondage all over the world. Bought or sold for a handful of money at the Equator, or for a bottle of train oil at the Poles; everywhere degraded as slaves, yet expected to have the virtue of saints and to be the ministering angels of man's life.

In Madagascar wives salute the husband by passing the tongue over his feet; and amongst the

Moors the wives stand and serve while their masters eat. Even the Esquimaux, who live upon tallow and drink the blood of seals—a creature half fish and only half human—employs the small gleam of intellect vouchsafed to him in forcing his wife to become his bond-slave. Nothing, indeed, but the hypothesis that the fallen angels of Heaven are expiating their rebellion in the form of woman, can account for the universal humiliation of the fated race.

In Europe, although women have never had any proper political recognition, yet they have always exercised great social influence.

In early times the Greek women were allowed to vote in the public assemblies, and, though masculine jealousy still denied them equality as citizens, yet they had a permitted rivalry in all that evidenced the supremacy of mind.

Corinna would compete with Pindar in verse and the daughter of Pythagoras lectured in his classes; Aspasia, the spirit queen of Pericles, discoursed philosophy to a listening Socrates; while maidens with that old desire for knowledge for which Eve perilled Paradise, were known to disguise themselves as students to attend the lectures

of Plato, although the ban of political inferiority was still resting on this sex.

In a land where the human form was a revelation of beauty; the religion, poetry; the rites, festivals; the language, music; where art had its noblest types, genius its brightest illustrations, and patriotism its immortal heroes, it is not strange that woman rose, through inspiration and sympathy, to be the priestess of intellect.

Therefore we find that the Greeks, above all, seem to have comprehended the true significance of women as the highest spiritual expression of humanity. The lofty and the beautiful, wisdom and grace, the secret harmonies of the universe, and the divine minor principle of nature were all symbolised under female forms, and their mythology was a true apotheosis of womanhood, free, however, from the bondage of marriage, for the muses and the divine Athené of the Parthenon were never married.

The Greeks evidently held that genius raises woman to a lonely elevation. The priestess cannot at once tend the fire on the domestic hearth and watch by the sacred flame on the Altar of God.

It is singular that although marriage is the only

institution brought from Paradise, and dates its ritual from before the Fall, yet in no mythology is the idea of divine inspiration connected with it. Muse or sibyl, priestess or pythoness, all on whom rested the spirit of prophecy or divination belonged to the virgin class; and the vestals were honoured above all other women, as if by their mystic consecration to virginity they became endowed with holier and higher powers.

At Rome the prætors and consuls lowered their fasces to them on the public way; the lictor attended them in the streets; they rode in chariots, and sat in the chief seats at spectacles in their white robes edged with purple, and the priestly fillet bound upon the brow, like the calm guardian genii of the empire, above and apart from all mere individual sympathies.

The position of women during the early period of European civilisation was not without dignity. The Gothic nations believed that amongst women many were endowed with the spirit of prophecy and mysterious powers over nature for good and evil. They were admitted to the priestly and legal offices, and sat at the war councils, and headed armies. Christianity developed this sense of woman's mystical nature into the chivalrous wor-

ship of the middle ages, where, through all the frenzied excesses of a courtesy gone mad, one can yet recognise the prevalent idea of woman's significance in the world as the inspirer, the spiritualiser, and the rewarder of the brave. The love of woman then ennobled like the love of glory. She was the high priestess of that religion of sentiment, honour and courage, that was the beautiful fanaticism of the creed of chivalry.

But the Pagan belief of her prophetic powers, and her half-deification by Christian chivalry, received further and fatal development, till the notion finally gained ground that woman in some mysterious manner could form a league with Satan himself, and through his potent power exercise a terrible and malefic influence over all things that excited her envy or her hatred. Then began the horrible persecutions that lasted throughout two centuries, when women, stigmatised as witches, were tortured, reviled, hunted down, burned alive, and stamped out of creation if they had the fatal gift of more beauty or more brains than other women.

After this terrible era the pretensions to supernatural power lay dormant for a long while until revived by the mesmerists, who brought forward

startling proofs that women really had affinities with the spiritual world much stronger than exist in the other sex. And the strange, mystic power they evidently possess has now become an acknowledged fact in occult philosophy.

We have now traced the history of women from Paradise to the nineteenth century, and have heard nothing through the long roll of the ages but the clank of their fetters—some of iron, like the gyves of the African bond-slave; others perhaps of gold, like those of the captive Zenobia; or heavy with jewels, as the anklets of Odalisque. Still fetters and manacles are on all; for law, prejudice and custom have combined to hold women in abject bondage for six thousand years.

One must regard, therefore, with genuine admiration the efforts of those brave-hearted heroines who, from time to time, have come forth from the ranks of the oppressed and striven to interpret the true significance of woman in the idea of humanity, and to lift her from the bondage and low level of a narrow, conventional code to the full perfection of a magnificent womanhood.

Yet there is still a mystery about woman's destiny which casts its shadow even over eternity. Here, the existence of woman is chiefly manifested

by love and sacrifice, and patient self-abnegation, that others may rejoice; heedless of herself, so as she can bring light to the life of those beloved. Thus she permeates all existence with sanctifying power, assuming all tenderest names and holiest relations—wife, mother, sister, daughter—so that under every form she may still—angel-like—stand beside man from the cradle to the grave, lavishing all that is beautiful in her nature with a silent devotion that exacts no return; the heart her kingdom, the affections her ministers.

This is her apparent mission on earth; but in the life beyond, when these earthly ministrations are not needed, what will be the aim and meaning of her existence? The position of the sex in the beatified universe is a sealed vision. Will male and female angels exist to all eternity, where there is no marrying or giving in marriage? or Cherubim and Seraphim, Knowledge and Love, are they, perchance, the male and female principle made eternally objective? or is there a rotation for each soul by successive incarnations in male and female forms, until, at last, humanity attains some glorified, full-developed organisation, in which the special qualities of each sex will be united, the intellect and the love, the tenderness and the

strength? or, least, probable hypothesis of all, will our wondrous humanity, made higher even than the angels, be forever divided into two races, one eternally lower than the other, so that, from first to last, the doom of woman may be read—subjection to man on earth, degradation beneath man in Heaven?

After all, perhaps, Swedenborg's visionary glance beheld the truth when he asserts that souls change sex at every moment in the spiritual world. Feminine when they aspire, masculine to the soul that has not yet reached an equal spiritual elevation, or as Emerson explains: "You love the worth in me, then I am your husband; meanwhile I adore the greater worth in another, and so become his wife. Do you love me means, do you see the same truth? If so, we are happy, our souls blend in harmony; but, presently, one of us passes into the perception of higher truth, then we are divorced, no tension can hold us longer."

This theory is confirmed by the fact that the love of woman is generally aspiration—hero-worship; while man receives homage more readily than he gives it.

It explains also the inconstancy of all-gifted, progressive natures; for such souls are forever

seeking new and loftier sympathies. Therefore the highest love is never mutual; the lower nature worships, but the higher still ascends and aspires.

Lastly, it explains the isolation of all genius; for the soul that yearns for the perfect, the infinite, the divine, cannot rest contented within the narrow limitations of one frail human heart inferior to it in all things. But justice to the women of earth is of more importance to us here than the destiny of women in Heaven, or speculations as to the rank they may hold in the future life. Enough if we demand and can obtain in this present span of time from law and usage, government and society, that woman shall have full privilege and freedom to develop all the powers of her intellect, as well as all the soft graces of her tender nature.

"What woman needs," as Margaret Fuller observes, "is not as a woman to rule, but as a nature to grow; as an intellect to discern; as a soul to lead the higher life, and unfold such powers as were given her with the living breath of God on the day of creation."

Hitherto the chief dogma of woman's education has been simply husband-worship. She was taught that if she studied it was simply to qualify herself as a companion to her husband; if she talked, it

should be just enough to show that she appreciated his profounder wisdom. She was to resign all individual taste, to dress only as he pleased, obey meekly as he ordered, and, whatever might be his faults, to give him unqualified homage as to a visible god.

It is time, surely, for this *Dalai Lama* religion to be somewhat modified; and already women are finding higher motives and nobler incentives for their life-work. Strong, redemptive souls have arisen amongst them to lead the crusade against custom and cant; and soon some Jael may appear to break the political bondage, or a Judith the sensuous bondage in which the sex has been held, and through their efforts a new era may be given to the world of equal rights, equal culture and equal honours for men and women.

It is remarkable that Christianity at once accepted woman as co-worker with man in the great mission of human elevation; and with what tenderness our Lord always treated the sex! His first miracle was in honour of a marriage, and it was performed at the request of a woman. Twice for woman's tears He raised the dead to life; His last human thoughts were for a woman, and His first utterance from the grave was to a woman. Even

the humbled sinner at His feet He raised from the dead with the pardoning fiat: "Neither do I condemn thee; go and sin no more."

Yet the elevation that began by Christianity has been only imperfectly carried out. In all penal enactments, certainly, a stern equality prevails, but all the social privileges of rank, title, wealth, honours and position are still exclusively reserved for men.

Two moral codes even are framed for man and woman, one permitting the widest latitude, the other exacting the most rigid obedience, under the penalty of being cast out into the wilderness. Yet, while women are expected to be strong against all temptation, no means are provided to save them from the helpless poverty that so often drags souls downward to despair. Nothing is done by laws, government or society towards giving women an honourable status and adequate reward for their gifts and work.

Yet many official positions might be selected for which women would be fully competent.

Female professorships might be founded, lecturers appointed, each with a definite income, and other and various paths of work and movement opened out to give women, not only the means to

live, but also a vivid interest in life by the honourable recognition of their gifts and powers. For this, too, is wanting to them, and the blank deprivation of all stimulants to exertion is fatal chiefly to women of genius; and the atrophy of the soul that comes to them is often an agony harder to bear than even poverty with its bitter privations.

If men, destined for all the honours the world can give, yet often sink down weary under the burden of their work, how can women keep up a brave spirit without any prospect whatever of honour or reward—they who have to fight their way through closing icebergs of social prejudice, cant and sophisms, until, too often, the languor of hopeless effort succeeds the fitful and transient manifestations of the higher nature, and genius dies out in despair for want of a definite sphere of action and a suitable reward.

Recognition in some visible form is a healthful and natural stimulant to exertion; for wherever there is talent there is ambition. Glory is the sympathy of the masses, and genius demands a shrine in the empire of humanity as well as an altar in the heart of one.

But in the freezing atmosphere of society what place have these consecrated souls of high intellect

and impassioned sensibilities, mostly uncomprehended, always misunderstood?

They cannot rest contented in the dull monotony of daily cares, while every avenue to wealth and rank is carefully reserved by man for his own benefit, along with those symbols of honour which the crowd reverence, because significant of merit.

Men who fight, lawyers who plead, poets who sing, may receive the often well-earned title that lifts them to nobility and symbolises the intellect that raised them above it; but there is no peerage of talent for the gifted amongst women. They may run their chariots in the dust of a stadium, but never hope to wear the laurel crown.

The Queen has already founded an order for distinguished bravery, and even another order to reward the faithful services of her household servants; would it not then be worthy of her sex and station to institute a royal order of merit for women eminent in literature and art, with title and life-income, after the ecclesiastical model—a peerage, in fact, without being hereditary?

Genius in man or woman deserves national recognition, of which rank and wealth are the outward and visible signs, and it is an injustice to deprive half the nation of all chance or hope of

national honours, while equal taxation is imposed on all alike.

At present women assist in supporting every institution of the empire, yet the Imperial taxes never come back to them in any form of benefit, and they are not even represented in the legislature.

With men it is different, every station and every honour is open for their competition, and, if they are taxed, they benefit. But even if representation in Parliament be denied to women, there might, surely, be an elective council of representative women, to organise measures for the advancement of the sex, and to formulate their timid pleadings for justice into a resolute demand.

The importance of special female universities should, above all, be advocated. Every office to be held by women—as President, Professors and Lecturers—and each office to be endowed with a certain definite rank and income suitable to the attainments of the recipient.

Female education at present is mere dilettanteism. It does not give what women really need so much, an assured status and an honourable independence. They are allowed, certainly, at present, a limited access to the great universities, but all

the profit and emoluments are still exclusively reserved for men.

Women, of course, if they have genius, can force their way into literature, but authorship is a very precarious profession, and seldom brings in an income on which life can be adequately supported; besides, all may not have the gift. Many minds have capabilities for other manifestations of mental power, and a suitable sphere should be found for all. Action for some, reflective work for another. Some souls speak best in deeds, in a life of rule and influence. Let such women be given stations of power and dignity—colonial government, for instance. Why not vice-queens as well as queens? Any station where intellect can be evidenced by a life of energetic good might be given to women thus gifted. To others leave the symbol of speech, and let the lonely spirit fashion it into a lever to move the world's great heart. The passionate pleadings of women for a due share of the rank and honours of the empire cannot always be stifled with the phrase: "Independent women, learned women, thinking women, are not liked; society only wants pretty, well-dressed women to attract and amuse." And so many a fine intellect amongst women lies buried under the desiccating

social system, like some grand statue of a god beneath the Libyan sands.

Yet there is no greater fallacy than the doctrine that women should be mere negations if they desire to charm and please in society; for ignorance and shallow vanity soon weary, even though aided by the glamour of beauty. And no woman without intellect ever yet gained permanent influence over a man's life.

"If women," says Addison, "would but think as much of the adornment of their minds as of their persons earth would soon recognise her queen."

As the old Greek mythus teaches—it is the cestus of Venus that confers the real power of fascination, for it means spiritual grace; and without it even Venus herself failed to captivate. Genius never yet unsexed a woman, or learning or culture ever so extended; but the meanness of her ordinary social routine life, with all its petty duties and claims, and ritual of small observances, degrades and humiliates her, for it deprives her of all dignity and leaves her without any meaning in God's great universe.

Hear how a modern poet mourns over female inanity and woman's "drossy chat," with the silly homage of silly lovers:

"Still as before and as now, balls, dances, and evening parties,
Shooting with bows, going shopping together, and hearing them singing;
Dangling beside them, and turning the leaves at the dreary piano;
Utter divorcement from sense, mother earth, and object of living."

While with rude eloquence he denounces the indolent vanity of woman's purposeless life:

"Ye unhappy statuettes, ye miserable trinkets,
Poor alabaster chimney-piece ornaments under glass cover;
Come, in God's name, come down. The very French clock by you
Puts you to shame with its ticking; the fire-irons deride you;
Come, in God's name, come down! Do anything; *be but something!*"

This is the true gospel needed for women—"Be but something!" A life of noble aims is a life of truest beauty—a music manifested. For the whole being then moves harmoniously forward in an ascension toward the highest and the divine.

Women of intellect, especially, cannot accept the routine life of ordinary society and be happy. They revolt against the claims on time and thought

of our petty conventional usages; they refuse to accept the limitations imposed by society on freedom of action; they chafe in the fetters of prejudice; and their strong, passionate natures spring up elastic against the injustice of laws and the bondage of social fictions. There are some brows that will not bend to be seared with the brand of inferiority, some souls that will not be fused into the uniform conglomerate demanded of mediocrity, like rocks in the lava stream its fires even cannot calcine. They demand a higher platform on which to plant the banner of the rights of women, with all the aids that society, the world, the universe can give to ensure the intellectual advancement of their sex.

Meanwhile woman need not be taken from the circle of her womanly duties, which are also her holiest joys; for all the triumphs of intellect fail to give her perfect happiness unless she is centred likewise in a strong, loving heart.

The praise of crowds, the glare of applause, never yet adequately compensated for the low, approving voice of one, and human love must thrill through every fibre of her being, or life, even in the splendour of success, would be to her but a twilight Urania without sunshine or glow.

Love is truly the sacrament of life by which consecrated souls rise into a diviner strength; yet it is still but a type of the higher aspirations for which the soul was created, and which alone can fill the spirit's infinite capacity for ascension and adoration.

Human relations, however, will adjust themselves without intervention of preachers or laws. They are the palm trees in the wilderness, beneath which the soul rests instinctively a space in its onward journey; a transient shadow, not an abiding home; while around rolls the cycle of eternity, and above is God, the true Bridegroom of the Soul.

Yet, surely, the sanctifying influences of human love will not be lessened because nobler existences meet within the limit of its many blessings. The highest minds are ever the holiest lovers. Wisdom and knowledge will not annihilate human passion, but rather bring down on it a diviner spirituality to sublimate and purify the earthly and the sensuous.

But some women, perhaps, may still pine in the mere limits guarded by the penates; proud, inspired souls, who need the world for a sphere, humanity for an object, and the glory of sacrifice for some great cause more than all the soft pleasures

of domestic love. These, too, will find their place at last, when every portal is opened to woman's intellect. They will become spiritual leaders of light and progress, and need no longer stand lonely in life, like a star rent from its system. Some noble purpose, some grand sphere, where passionate energy can work along with duty, will ensure for these lofty missionary natures the only happiness of which such exalted organisations are susceptible.

Thus, every grade and class, thinkers and doers, apostles of freedom or ministrants of mercy, will manifest after their ability the divine uses of existence, and claim their right as women to a recognised place amongst the workers for humanity.

Irish Peasant Tales.

A NIGHT WITH THE FAIRIES.

In a remote part of the mountain district of the West of Ireland there dwelt, once on a time, a young man named Denis Ryan, as fine a young fellow as ever lived, and as brave as he was handsome. But his home was very lonely and desolate, for hardly a human being ever came that way. So by degrees he grew weary of his life altogether, and longed to follow the clouds that went sailing away over his head on to the great wide sea, beyond which were bright, beautiful new lands where, perhaps, he might be happy. And, finally, he could bear the desolate loneliness no longer, but one day threw up his work and resolved to go down amidst the people of the plains, and see if they knew anything of joy and laughter and the free life that stirs the soul of youth.

So early one morning, before sunrise, he began boldly to descend the mountain, not knowing which path to take, but walked on and on till he was dead tired without meeting a soul, when, just at night-

fall, as the black darkness was coming on, he came to a rude hut in a lonely glen with nothing but bare heath all around. And the hut looked dreary and queer, but he was so pressed by hunger and fatigue that he resolved to brave the worst, and lifting the latch he entered.

No one was there but an old woman crouching over the fire, and she looked very angry, and told him to begone, for that was no place for him to find shelter and food.

"But, mother," he said, "let me rest, for there is no other place in all the country round for miles and miles, and I am weary and hungry after crossing the mountains and travelling since dawn. Let me rest in peace."

Then the old woman grew softer and gentler, and let him sit down by the fire, and gave him food. But when he was rested she told him that he had now better leave at once, as strange people were coming who would be wroth if they saw him, and certainly do him some injury.

"Yet, mother," he said, "let me stay till daylight, for I am so weary and in need of rest. Let me stay, in the name of God, and the blessing of the Lord will be on you."

"Hush!" she cried, with an angry voice. "That

name is never to be named here. There are people coming who would kill you if you uttered that word before them. Now, mind what I tell you. At midnight they will be here, and you must hold your peace, and be civil and quiet, but ask no questions and eat no food they may offer you, and beware of making the sign of the cross or naming the Name."

So he watched and waited, and at midnight a tramping was heard outside, as of the rushing of many feet, and the door flew open, and in came a crowd of little men, each wearing a red doublet and cape, and a small cocked hat on the head, with a white feather.

They stared at the stranger with bold, fearless eyes, but were not unfriendly; and when the old woman spread out the table with food they all sat down to supper in the highest glee, and asked the young man to join them and eat.

This, however, he refused, saying he had already eaten his supper, thanks to the good, kind lady of the hut; so they let him alone, and were very merry amongst themselves. And after the food each man produced a bottle, and the drink was poured out in tiny cups with much laughter and merriment.

Now when the young wayfarer saw the beautiful red wine he longed for it so much that when they offered him a cup he was loth to refuse, but drank it off, and then another and another, though the old woman held up her finger and made signs to him to warn him of the danger. And after they had all drank and laughed and made merry, the chief of the little men rose up and said, "Comrades, it is time we were off, the moon is up, the wine is out, and we must go and search for more. I know of a grand gentleman in the far north who has the best cellars in the whole country round; let us go at once to him before the day dawns, and while all the household sleep we can fill our bottles and be away before their morning dreams are over." And turning to the stranger he asked: "Young man, will you go with us?" "Aye, that I will," replied the young fellow, for the wine had made him valiant. "Then here's to the north!" shouted all the little men, and he shouted "Here's to the north!" as loudly as any of them.

"Then let us be off," said the leader, "but first give our friend here a red cape and a hat with a white feather." So they dressed him up just like one of themselves, and then they all rushed out into the night like a whirlwind of fallen leaves;

and presently they stopped before the gate of a stately castle, and the leader just touched the lock and it opened at once; and they entered a great hall and passed down a flight of stairs till they came to a cellar underground, locked and bolted, but the leader just touched the door with his thumb and it opened freely; and they all went in and filled their bottles, and drank, besides, as much wine as they liked of the best and rarest.

"Come, now," said the leader at last, "we have had enough. Let us be off to Connaught. This is right good Spanish wine, and we'll know where to find it again, but now we must go before the day dawns."

So they all scampered off again like a rush of leaves before the wind.

But Denis had taken so much wine that he was unable to follow them, and he lay helpless on the floor of the cellar.

So when morning came, the master of the place coming in, found him there fast asleep. "Ah, my fine fellow!" he exclaimed, "have I caught you at last? And all my good Spanish wine spilled about and ever so many bottles stolen. You shall hang for this, as sure as fate."

So the poor youth was carried off to gaol, and be-

ing fairly tried by judge and jury, was condemned to be hanged; for he had no defence to offer. It was quite evident that he had broken open the cellar door and stolen the wine, and consequently deserved his fate.

And when the fatal day came, all the town was crowded to see young Denis dance the rope-dance; and the priest walked by him saying the prayers, and the hangman stood there holding the cap to cover the face of the poor young man for his execution; and the sheriff looked on to see that all was right and proper.

"Now," said the unhappy criminal, speaking up for the last time, "I have just one favour to ask of these good gentlemen before I die. Do not put that ugly thing over my face which the hangman is holding in his hand, but give me my own red cap with the white feather that I had on when I was arrested in the cellar, and let me die with it on my head, and nothing else." Now, the sheriff was a tender-hearted man, and he pitied the young fellow, so he said: "Let him have the cap; go, fetch it for him, and let him die in peace." "Ay," said Denis, "I shall now die happy," and he took the cap with the white feather in his hand, and placing it at once upon his head, he cried out in a loud

voice, "Here's for home!" And then arose a great commotion amongst all the officials round the gallows, and the sheriff and the priest and the hangman stared at each other speechless with amazement, for the young man had disappeared, cap and all, and from that hour to this no tale or tidings of him could be heard; and the sheriff and the hangman looked very foolish as they made their way home amidst the hootings and the laughter of the crowd, who shouted for joy that the gallows had been cheated, for that time at least, of so fine a young fellow for a victim as Denis Ryan.

A LEGEND OF SHARK.

On Shark Island there lived some years ago a woman named Mary Callan with her one only child. Indeed, she never had another, from the fright she got some weeks after her baby was born, and this was her strange story: Suddenly at dead of night she was awoke by the child crying, and starting up she lit a candle, when to her horror she saw two strange men standing beside her bed, and they threw a mantle over her and drew her out of the house into the dark night; and there at the door she saw a horse waiting, and one of them lifted her up and then sprang up himself, and they rode away like the wind into the darkness.

Presently they came to a great, black-looking house, where a woman was waiting, who brought her in and she found herself all at once in a splendid hall lit up with torches and hung with silk. And the woman told her to sit down and wait till she was called, as there was very important business for her to attend to. Now, when the woman

left her alone, Mary began to look about her with great curiosity, and a large silver pot on the table filled with sweet-smelling ointment specially attracted her, so that she could not help rubbing some on her hands, and touching her eyes with the fragrant salve.

Then suddenly a strange thing happened, for the room seemed filled with children, but she knew that they were all dead, for some of them were from her own village, and she remembered their names and when they died. And as she watched them one of the children came over quite close, and looking fixedly on her asked: "What brought you here, Mary, to this dreadful place? for no one can leave it until the Judgment Day, and we dwell forever in sorrow for the life that has been taken from us. And the men went for your child tonight, to bring it here amongst the dead, but when you struck a light they could do no harm; yet they are still watching for it, so hasten back or it will be too late, and the child will die. And tell my mother that I am with the Spirits of the Hill, and not to fret, for we shall meet again on the Judgment Day."

"But how can I go out in the darkness?" asked Mary, "for I know not my way."

"Never mind," said the child; "here, take this leaf and crush it close in your hand, and it will guide you safe from harm." And she placed a green leaf in the woman's hand, and on the instant Mary found herself outside the door of the great house; but a tremor fell on her, for loud voices were heard calling her back, and footsteps seemed to pursue her as she fled away. Then, just as she was sinking to the earth with fright, she grasped the leaf close in her hand, and in a moment she was at her own door, and the footsteps of the pursuers ceased; but she heard a great cry within the house, and a woman rushed out and seized her arm. "Come, Mary," she said, "come quickly. Your child is dying. Something is strangling it, and we cannot help or save him."

Then Mary, wild with fear, sprang to the little bed where lay the child, and he was quite black in the face, as if some one was holding him by the throat; but, quick as thought, Mary took the leaf and crushed it into the child's hand. And gradually the convulsion passed away, and the natural colour came back, and in a little while he slept peacefully in his mother's arms, and she laid him in his bed and watched by him all night; but no harm came, and no evil thing touched him. And

in the morning he smiled up at his mother, bright and rosy as ever, and then she knew that the fairy power was broken, and the child was saved by the spell of the leaf that had come to her from the hands of the dead that dwelt in the Spirit Land. And Mary made a case for the leaf, and worked it richly, and tied it round her neck to wear for evermore. And from that day the fairies ceased to molest her, and her child grew and prospered, for the Spirits of the Dead watched over him to keep him safe from harm.

THE DOCTOR'S VISIT.

The fairies have always an earnest desire for the aid of a mortal physician in sickness, especially if a fairy baby is expected. One evening, late in summer, a servant in rich livery rode up to the house of the chief doctor of Roscommon, and handed him a letter requesting his attendance immediately for a lady of rank, who had been taken suddenly ill and was in great danger.

The doctor, with that alacrity in cases of emergency for which his honourable profession is distinguished, instantly ordered his horse; but as he was quite unacquainted with the locality mentioned, and had never even heard the name of the residence before, he requested the servant to accompany him, and they rode off together at a brisk pace.

After a couple of hours' ride they came to a fine house in a park thickly wooded, and there on the steps of the mansion was a grand, stately gentle-

man awaiting them, like a nobleman in dress and bearing, who received the doctor with great courtesy, and led him into the house, where a number of servants in splendid livery were in attendance.

Having passed through a spacious hall, the doctor and the gentleman entered a gorgeous saloon hung with silk and tapestry, and from that they passed into the lady's sleeping chamber, when the master of the house withdrew, leaving the doctor alone with the lady, who lay on a gilded couch with rich silken curtains falling all round her.

The doctor lost no time in making use of his professional skill, and with the best results, but all the time the lady had a black veil over her face, and spoke no word. However, when all had ended satisfactorily, the doctor rang the bell and the gentleman appeared.

He made no remark to the veiled lady, but courteously thanking the doctor, handed him forty golden guineas as his fee, and then requested him to come to supper, which was awaiting them in the grand saloon.

There the doctor found many noble guests assembled, and ladies glittering with jewels, and a gorgeous feast covered the table; but he was tired, and threw himself on the sofa to rest, when all the

company gathered round him and entreated him to eat and drink. And the master handed him a silver cup of ruby wine, and told him he must drink the lady's health, and he pressed the cup into his hand. So the doctor was too polite to refuse, and he rose up with the cup in his hand to quaff the wine in honour of the lady, when a beautiful young girl near him touched his foot and whispered gently: "Beware of the wine; touch nothing here; it is fatal," and she drew him down again on the sofa, and sat beside him, holding his hand. And it seemed to him nothing on earth could surpass her in beauty, with her golden hair and glittering eyes; and still she held his hand and murmured soft words in his ear till a faintness came over him, and gradually his eyes closed in a deep sleep, and he knew nothing more till the sound of his own name, called in a loud voice, aroused him.

He started up and looked around. The morning sun was bright in the east, but all the glory and the beauty of the festival had vanished, and he was in a churchyard alone. No, not quite alone, for his faithful servant Terry was beside him, assisting him to rise.

"Where am I?" exclaimed the bewildered doctor, "and what has brought me here?"

"Look there," said Terry. "Your Honour is just lying on Father Byrne's tombstone. And lucky it is the sign of the cross is upon it, as I knew Your Honour was safe when I called you; and glad I am, for I have been looking for you since daylight, and never would have thought of trying the churchyard, only the mare, poor beast, was at the gate as if trying to get in. Though how Your Honour came here is a wonder, unless you were carried over the wall, for the gate was locked, and I ran myself to get the key. And it's a hard bed you've had, and a cold bolster," added Terry, rolling away a big stone that had been placed under the doctor's head for a pillow. "God protect us, master dear, but the good people must have had a hand in this work, and bad luck would have come of it, only Your Honour lay down on the sign of the blessed cross, and so Your Honour is safe this time, anyway."

"Well, Terry, help me up," said the doctor, who was rather benumbed and a little crestfallen, thinking of that beautiful young creature who had played him such a trick—"and, Terry, go and fetch the mare, for I must be home at once."

So while the mare was coming round the doctor put his hand in his pocket just to comfort himself

with a sight of the golden guineas, but lo! nothing was there save a handful of moss, and the doctor rode home a sadder and a wiser man.

FAIRY HELP.

Every district in Ireland has its peculiar and separate fairy chief or king. Finvarra, as everyone knows, has his palace on the hill of Knockma, at Tuam, deep under the ground, where the walls are of crystal and the floor is paved with gold. And he has power over all the fairies of that region, and is adored by them, for he is handsome and splendid, and all the fairy ladies of his court are beautiful as a garden of roses. But another chief rules over the western seacoast of the Atlantic, whose name is Fiachra.

Now there was a gentleman of ancient lineage living in that part of the country, of the great race of the O'Haras; and Lochlin O'Hara was noted above all others for the open house and the liberal hand, for he spent his money like a king right royally; but bad times came, he got engaged in a lawsuit which carried off all his money, and Lochlin O'Hara was on the verge of despair, when at last the good news came that the cause was given

in his favour, and all the land of his forefathers was to be restored to him.

So he resolved to make a great feast to all comers, to celebrate his triumph, but when he began to reckon up the numerous friends and relations who were sure to assemble to drink his health, and all the guests from the country round, he grew alarmed, for there was not wine enough in the cellars for them all; and the weather was bad, and no boat could get to Galway. So he thought of Fiachra, the fairy chief, who was always good to the old families, especially the O'Haras; and he wrote him a letter telling of his great need, and asking for the royal help of the fairy king. And he threw the letter into the sea and awaited the result.

Not long, however, had he to wait, for next day there was a storm along the coast, and a great keg of Spanish wine was flung up on the beach as if from a shipwreck. But O'Hara knew that Fiachra had sent it, and he and his friends feasted and drank right merrily, and in no man's memory had such wine ever been poured out at a feast as Lochlin O'Hara gave on that night to the assembled guests in the home of his fathers.

For Fiachra honoured the old race because they

had ever been good to the fairies, and never meddled with their hunting-grounds, but always respected their raths and mounds, and the ancient hawthorns where they sheltered and lived happily, and danced all night in the moonlight to the fairy music.

The islanders in these remote places are firm believers in witchcraft to this day, and still practise many strange spells amongst themselves. There was a man called Ned Flaherty, who was specially suspected by his neighbours as being in league with the Evil One, for, though he had only a small patch of ground, yet he had always plenty of corn to bring to the market, and was rich and well off and wanted for nothing. So they all determined to watch by turns; and one morning the neighbour who was set to spy over the field saw something black going to and fro, each time carrying a grain of corn, which it then set in the ground and returned for more, till many grains were thus carried away and planted. Then at last the man got near, and saw that it was a hideous black insect doing all the work, and he stooped down and caught it, and put it in a horn snuff-box that he happened to have with him, and shut down the lid close and carried it home.

Now in a little while there was a great commotion, for Flaherty's wife had disappeared, and all the next day they searched for her, but without success. Then the man happening to tell the story of the insect in his snuff-box to a neighbour, "How do you know," said his friend, "but this may be Flaherty's wife you have in the box?" And Flaherty himself, hearing of the tale, came to the house and heard the whole story, after which he begged the man to come home with him and bring the box with him and open it in his presence. This the man did, before Flaherty and several of the neighbours, that all might judge of the truth of the strange story. And when the box was opened, out crawled a large black insect like a beetle, and ran direct into the woman's room as hard as it could go. And after a little while out came Mrs. Flaherty, looking very pale, and with one of her fingers bleeding.

"What means this blood?" asked the man.

"Why," said Flaherty, "when you shut down the box you snapped off a little bit of the beetle's claw that was outside, so my wife suffers."

Then all the people saw that there was witchcraft in the house, and the Flahertys were shunned by

everyone, and finally they sailed away from the island and were seen no more.

In Shark Island they tell a story of a man called Dermot, whose wife died of a fever, leaving two children, a boy and a girl. The girl died a year and a day after the mother, but the boy throve well, until one day when the fever seized him, and he cried out that his mother had come for him, and was calling him. And he asked for a drink of water, but there was none in the house. So a girl took a can and ran down to the well to fill it. And as she was stooping down a black shadow fell on her and covered her. Then she saw the dead mother close beside her, and nearly fainted with fright.

"Never fear, Mary alanna," said the woman, "but do as I bid you. When you go home you will see a black cock by the head of the child's bed. This is the Spirit of Death come to carry away the boy, but you must prevent him; therefore do as I tell you. Catch a crowing hen and kill her, and sprinkle the blood over the bed, and take ten straws and throw the tenth away, and stir the blood with the rest; then lay them on the child, and he will sleep and do well." On this the dead woman van-

ished, and the girl went home and did as she was ordered; the hen was killed, and the blood sprinkled. And the boy slept after the blood touched him, and slept on and on till the morning. Then he sat up and asked for food, and said he was now quite well and must go and play. So they let him get up, and he was as strong as ever, and no harm came to him any more.

And the heart of the father was glad that the child was given back to him through the sprinkling of the blood.

Now it happened that about three months after a child of one of the neighbours grew sick and was like to die. Then the man's wife rose up and said: "See, now, our child is like to die, but look how Dermot cured his son through the sprinkling of blood. Let us do the like." So they caught a crowing hen and killed her, and sprinkled the blood over the sick child. But lo! a terrible thing happened, for the door was flung open, and in walked two monstrous black cats. "How dare you kill my kitten?" said one of them—"my darling only kitten! But you shall suffer for it." "Ay," said the other, "we'll teach you how to insult a royal cat again, and kill one of our great race just to save your own wretched child," and they flew

at the man and tore his face and hands. Then the wife rushed at them with the churn-dash, while the man strove to defend himself with a spade. But all the same the cats had the best of it, and clawed and tore and scratched till the miserable pair could not see for the blood streaming down their faces.

Luckily, however, the neighbours, hearing the scrimmage, rushed in and helped to fight the cats; but soon they had to fly, for the cats were too strong for them, and not a soul could stand before them. However, at last the cats grew tired, and after licking their paws and washing their faces, they moved towards the door to go away, first saying to the man: "Now we have done enough to punish you for this time, and your baby will live, for Death can take but one this night, and he has taken our child. So yours is safe, and this we swear by the blood and by the power of the great king of the cats." So they whisked out of the house, and were never more seen by man or mortal on the Island of Shark.

But many other strange things have also happened on the island, according to the narration of the islanders, who are extremely accurate in all the

details they give, and never exaggerate, only tell the simple truth, which we are bound to accept unquestioned; for the people are too simple to invent, they only tell in their plain, unvarnished idiom what they have seen and heard. A man and his wife on the island had two children, lovely as angels, and were very happy. But in process of time a third child was born, a son, and he was two inches longer than any baby that ever yet was seen, and had a great head of black hair, and even something like a beard. And he went on growing up fast to three years old, and was as wise as a man, besides eating a power of food.

But after that he dwindled down, and became quite weeshee and no size at all, though he ate as much as ever. And he was queer in his ways, and with his wizened little face looked just like the sprite of an old man or an ugly dwarf.

Well, one Sunday the parents went to mass, leaving a young girl to take care of the children. And, while she was out in the garden picking flowers, suddenly she heard the merriest, jolliest dance-tune from the bagpipes, played by some one in the house.

That must be Tom the piper, she said, as she went in, but lo and behold, there was the little imp

stuck up in his grandmother's arm-chair, and he playing away with all his might the sweetest music on a set of paper pipes, and with his wizened face looking fifty years old at least. "Oh, the Lord between us and harm!" exclaimed the girl, rushing out of the house and screaming at the top of her voice—"Help! help! sure it's the devil himself is sitting there, and not the child at all!" And the neighbours ran when they heard the screams, and went back with her into the house, but not a sign of the little imp was to be seen, though after much searching he was discovered behind the meal-tub, a mere little sheeoge, not the size of a sod of turf, and burned black as any coal, and quite dead, stiff and stark, with the withered face of an old, old man.

So they all knew he was a witch child. And when the parents came home they had him put outside on the shovel, and before night he was gone; the devil or the fairies carried him away. And right glad were the man and his wife to be so well rid of the imp of Satan, who was never more seen or heard of in the house from that hour.

The islanders seem to live forever in the presence of the spiritual; and every event of their lives,

whether for good or ill-luck, is attributed to the influence of unseen beings, who are sometimes good, but more often malign to mortals. Every sickness or accident or misfortune is believed to be the work of the invisible *Sidhe,* or fairy race; and all the primitive science of the people, their knowledge of herbs, and of powerful charms and incantations, is used to break the spells and counteract the sinister designs of the active sprites who haunt the house, and are especially anxious to get possession of the children and carry them off to the fairy homes. A pretty little girl was out one day weeding in the turnip-field, when a sudden blast swept over the place, and gave her a chill, so that she lost the use of her limbs for the time, and was carried home and put to bed. Six months she lay there, and grew thinner and thinner, till she looked like a little old woman. So the people saw at last that she was fairy-struck, and no doubt was away every night with the fairies on the hill, though she seemed to be lying there helpless in her bed. And they beat her and starved her to make her tell them how she got away, and what she did when with the fairies.

But the poor child cried to them: "Sure, I am little Mary, and never a foot have I stirred out

since you laid me in this bed." Yet not a word would they believe, and set to work to make a powerful fairy potion of known potency against witch-work—three drops to be poured into her ear and three drops down her throat, and the remainder to be used for washing her. And they sent for a wise fairy woman to see what could be done. But Mary said: "I will not drink the potion. Let me die, for then I shall go to heaven and be at peace."

"Well," said the wise woman, "there is one thing yet may be done to break the devil's spell that is over the child, and if that fails she must die. Let her father carry her to the bog every morning before sunrise, and dip her down for twice seven days in the name of the Holy Trinity and the blessed saints. And if that does not help and cure her, then the power of the Evil One is too strong, and I can do no more. But let her father try it, in the name of God."

So each morning for twice seven days the father carried the child to the bog, and dipped her down before the sun had risen. And gradually her health and strength returned, and at the end of the twice seven days, on the final days of the cure, she was able to walk all the way back to her own place.

And the weakness passed from her limbs, and the colour and beauty came back to her face, for the spell of the fairies was broken at last, through the words of the wise woman and her power over the spirits of evil.

ST. PATRICK AND THE WITCH.

When St. Patrick came over to Ireland to convert the pagans no one would give him a lodging, for so the Druid priests had ordered. And he wandered on till at last he came to a small inn, where he was allowed to rest, the people not knowing him. And in the night he was thirsty, and asked for water, but the mistress told him she had forgotten to fill the vessels, and there was no water except at the well. Then Patrick said he would go and fill the can for himself, and fetch it home.

On this the woman wondered greatly, and asked what country he came from to be so brave, for a great enchanter lived by the well, and no one dared to go near it in the dark night. The saint, however, made answer that he feared no harm, for God and the angels would guard him. So she gave him a wooden noggin with a lid to carry the water, and bade him take care how he lifted his eyes to look at the light set on the rock where the en-

chanter dwelt, or he would certainly fall down dazed and die.

But Patrick, nothing fearing, went forth; and when he came to the rock by the well he cast a strong spell over the place in the name of the Trinity, and the magician trembled and uttered a loud cry, and then dropped down dead on his face and spake no word.

So Patrick was at peace to fill the vessel with water from the well, and he returned safe to the inn.

And it was a saying afterwards amongst the Irish, if they were offended or suffered injury: "The curse of St. Patrick on the Man of the Well be on your head for evermore!"

Now, the magician had a mother—a wicked witch called Churana—and she vowed vengeance on Patrick, and turned her sorceries against him.

So he pursued her to Croagh-Patrick, where she lived, and ascended the mountain after her, though she flung down great rocks on him to stop his way. But he prayed to the Lord, who gave him strength to fling them aside, and still he went on up the mountain. Then the witch caused a great fog to arise, and he was left alone, for none of his disciples could find their way to follow him

in the darkness. Still Patrick went on all alone, until, by chance, his foot struck against a bell on the mountain path; and when he rang it, his followers heard and came to him. And at last they gained the top, though all was black darkness around them by reason of the fog.

And it was the first Sunday in harvest-time, which Sunday was called ever after through all the years *Donagh-tram-dubh* ("the Sunday of Gloom").

Then they began to descend the mountain. But the witch caused water to be poured over them that was nauscous to the smell and taste; so the Sunday is also called "Garlic Sunday" ever since. Still, never heeding, they pursued her even as far as the great lake, where the evil witch plunged into the water. But Patrick struck her with the bell as she passed him and slew her; and her blood changed the water to red, so that the lake was known ever after as Lough-Dearg, or "the Red Lake."

And Patrick, in memory of his deliverance, established a station there and founded a monastery. And yet once more he ascended Croagh-Patrick, and beheld all the country lying westward; but, finding that his time was short, and that

he could not visit Connemara nor the lands near, he lifted up his hands and invoked a blessing on the bays and the harbours and the shores of Connemara, even a sevenfold blessing. So ever since the fish are abundant there beyond all other places on the coast of Ireland.

Nor yet had he time to visit Erris; but, unhappily, he forgot, before leaving the mountain, to invoke a blessing on the island, so the people of Erris are still pagan in all their ways—rakish and prodigal, and given to strong drink, even to this day—for the blessing of Patrick never rested on them, nor on their land or coasts.

Historic Women—A Poem.

HISTORIC WOMEN—A POEM.

Yes, they have lived! these women whose great
names
Are graven deep on the world's history:
Strong, splendid souls that chafed at human
wrong,
And tyranny and servile servitude,
And bonds that strangle nations to the death;
So flung their lives down with a passionate waste,
As incense upon altar sacrifice,
For glory, country, love, or some great cause;
For a whole people merged in nationhood,
Or one more loved than nations or the world.
Annihilating even womanhood,
With all its soft tears and compassionate grace,
When Heaven had need of hero-hands to strike
For vengeance, people's rights, or liberty.
And who dares judge these women, God-possessed,
With deep prophetic eyes, on whom was laid
The mission to avenge? Strength from the Lord
Was given them. Their words had priestess-power;

Their deeds, though red with crimson cruelties,
Had yet the deep significance of justice,
And taught the world by many a dreadful sign
That sin must be struck down with resolute hand,
E'en though it wear a monarch's mighty crown,
Or feast with us at purple festivals,
Or plead for shelter in our very tent.
    See Miriam clashing cymbals in the dawn
For bondage broken and a people freed,
While Pharaoh's hosts are drowning at her feet,
Till up through gilded folds of morning clouds,
By desert Temples and by yellow seas,
Loud hymns of freedom echoed back her words,
And the grand rhythm of the march of men!
    Thus, 'mid the clustering palms of Ramah's well
Arose great Deborah's tragic song of scorn;
While Jael stood by fallen Sisera,
Fearful to see—the hammer in her hand—
Even as she smote him sleeping in her tent;
The awful inspiration still upon her
Of that fierce deed by which "the land had rest."
So, Judith, gorgeous in her painted tire,
And loveliness that dazed men's eyes to see,
With jewels twined amid her perfumed hair,
Passed like a glorious vision through the gate

Of sad Bethulia to the Assyrian's tent,
And slew him with her beauty ere she took
The glittering falchion from the golden bed
And freed her people by one mighty stroke.
This must at least be granted to the sex,
That Woman is no coward fronting fate.
Sublime in love, in suffering, in death,
She treads all terrors down with calm disdain,
As stars tread out the blackness of the sky,
In silent grandeur. Such the Roman wife
Who drew the dagger from her husband's hand
And stabbed herself, to teach him how to die;
Then, smiling, said, "It is not painful, Pætus;"
Such the proud queen, who would have flung away
A kingdom for her lover, like a pearl,
Yet scorned to wear the Victor's gilded chain,
Or trail her royal robes in Roman streets,
So, from the asp took swift and sudden death,
Self-slain, in all her splendour like a queen,
With Egypt's crown still resting on her brow.
For strength is in the woman's pliant nature
As iron in the bending grasses. These
The softest wind may prostrate to the earth,
Though storms will fail to break. We trace it plain,
Through all her sad, vain, feeble outward life,

Like steadfast threads of gold in gossamer.
And never failed the race in heroines
When God had need of martyrs, or the world
Of ministrants to pour the wine of life
For the pale athletes weary with the toil,
And fainting in the dust of the Arena.
Through Pagan, Christian, Feudal, Modern times
The Woman is the synonym for courage;
From Artemisia to the Orleans maid,
Whose pyre was lighted with her victor palms;
Or her who stabbed the tyrant in his bath
For love of France, then bowed her fair young head
Beneath the guillotine—content to die,
So Marat's yoke was lifted from the land;
Or Roland's wife, who stood amid the storm
Of surging passions sweeping down a throne,
Calm as that sculptured goddess on whose brow
The whirlwind drives the drifting Libyan sands.
We see her yet! her proud, pale features lit
With glory of such dreams as Plato loved,
Strewing red rose-leaves on the wine-cup drained
That last night with the fated Girondins;
Still true to Freedom, holding it absolved
From all the desecrating crimes of man;
Still to the last invoking Liberty,
E'en on the blood-stained scaffold as she died,

The Martyr-Priestess of the Revolution.
But there are gentler memories of Women.
Let us take up the bead-roll reverently,
As holy hands count rosaries with prayer,
Of those whose influence on glorious minds
Have made their own names glorious evermore,
Shining in splendour on the poet's page
Like bright initial letters on a scroll
Made consecrate by saints; or some fair bordering
Woven of shimmering lights like powdered gems
On dark, discoloured leaves of human life.
Vittoria Colonna's marble brow
Still bears serenely as a Phidian Muse
The laurel-wreath of Michael Angelo;
Petrarca's crown is laid at Laura's feet;
While Leonora by that trembling kiss
On Tasso's lips one gentle summer's day
In the duke's garden, as he read to her
His own great story of Christ's Sepulchre,
Has bound the poet's soul with hers forever.
And radiant Beatrice with starry eyes
Guiding great Dante up from Hell to Heaven,
Until he reached the glory of the Throne,
And saw the circling saints in their white stoles,
Stands yet within the everlasting light,
Her gaze fixed on the sun, immovable,

As Dante saw her in the Paradiso,
The glorified ideal of the Woman.
And still are with us women who can guide
The souls of men to calm, clear heavenly heights
Where clouds and mist roll down beneath the feet.
Heroic hearts are near, deep spirit-eyes
Gleam on us in the darkness of our lives,
As on the shepherds in the midnight gleamed
The star that lit them to the feet of Christ.
The race can never die. Still on our ears
The clear "Excelsior" from a woman's lips
Rings out across the Apennines, although
The woman's brow lies pale and cold in death
With all the mighty marble dead in Florence.
For while great songs can stir the hearts of men,
Spreading their full vibrations through the world
In ever-widening circles till they reach
The Throne of God, and song becomes a prayer—
And prayer brings down the liberating strength
That kindles nations to heroic deeds—
She lives—the great-souled poetess who saw
From Casa Guidi windows Freedom dawn
On Italy, and gave the glory back
In sunrise hymns for all Humanity!
And homage must we give to her who wears,
With the calm grace of God's anointed Queen,

The diadem of Kingdoms on her brow.
Supreme above all women—Empress-Queen
Of countless millions and of half the globe,
Yet blending with her royal majesty
The soft, sweet music of a woman's life.
Gentle, while all her armies shake the earth,
And seas and oceans bear her lion flag,
Strong, with the sacred reverence for truth,
Steadfast for right, and loyal to her land
Through storm and sunshine, splendour, gloom,
and tears;
For no unworthy act has ever marred
The holy consecration to the vow
Her child-lips uttered in that solemn hour
When, crowned with sovereignty, she took her place
Amid the sceptred monarchs of the world.
And others, great as heroines of old,
Still breathe our common air. Do we not see
Imperial, beautiful, and gifted women
Reigning by right divine of womanhood,
By angel-goodness, or by queenly grace,
Claiming instinctive homage from the crowd?
Some Sibyl with her shadowed, mystic eyes,
Seems fresh from commune with Divinity;
Or some sweet Sappho with her passionate lute
Wakes the deep inner music of the heart.

Others recall the glory of the Greek
Who ruled with the Olympian Pericles,
And, with Aspasia's genius-given power,
They gather round them in a zone of light
Poets and sages and philosophers,
Golden-mouthed orators, and all whose souls
Burn with the proud ambition to be great.
And some bear high above the people's heads
The starry oriflamme of nationhood,
Chanting their solemn songs of Faith and Hope,
Till all the masses tremble as the leaves
Of forests when a tropic storm sweeps by,
While from the Pythian passion of their eyes
Flow mighty inspirations, such as fired
The souls of Greeks—made heroes when they gazed
On great Athené of the Parthenon.
But above all creation Woman stands
Sublimely consecrated by His Will
Who chose the maiden-mother of the Christ,
To manifest the full Divinity;
And placed the glorious hieroglyph on high
Of the crowned Woman by the Throne of God,
Clothed with the sun, the moon beneath her feet,
And on her brow a coronal of stars.
Some lesson from the far Infinity
Is shrined within this everlasting sign,

Teaching, perhaps, to all in Earth and Heaven
That far above all might of intellect,
All thrones, dominions, kingdoms, grades, and powers,
Of angels with the trumpets and the seals,
The moral nature symbolised by Woman
Is nearest God's similitude, and shows
The Soul's divinest excellence of beauty.
And still the true Divine is born of Woman,
Still, as of old, she kisses wounded feet,
Cleansing the earth-stains with her pitying tears,
Still pours sweet spikenard upon weary brows,
Still stands beside the Cross to weep and pray
Through the deep gloom of crucifixion hours,
Still watches by the sepulchre to greet
With tender, trustful, radiant words of love
The uprisen soul that casts its grave-clothes by
And springs to freedom from the bonds of sin.
Priestess and victress! through the world's dark ways,
Up the great altar stairs that lead to Heaven,
The torch of Love in her uplifted hand,
Woman still guides Humanity, and best
Fulfils the woman's mission when she tends
The sacred fires of Glory, Faith, and Truth
In human hearts. True helpmeet for the Man,

When with a holy, pardoning, saintly zeal
She draws the erring nature back to God
With bands of love. Still pleading for the Right
In words that weep and tears that speak like
prayers;
The guiding angel of a darkened world
Whose only light can come from Faith and Love.

THE END.

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